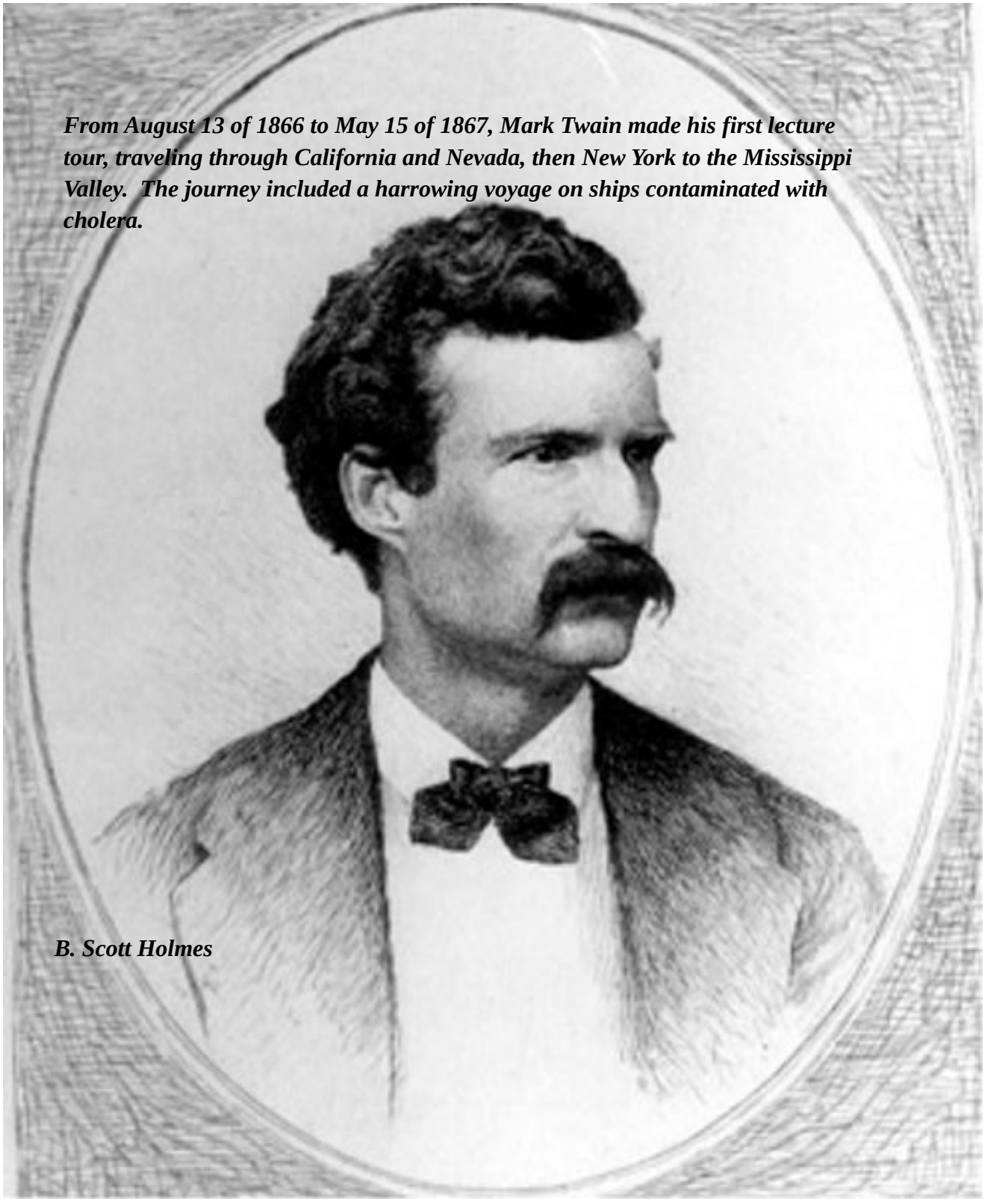
Mark Twain's Sandwich Islands Tour

Mark Twain's Sandwich Islands Lecture Tour



From August 13 of 1866 to May 15 of 1867, Mark Twain made his first lecture tour, traveling through California and Nevada, then New York to the Mississippi Valley. The journey included a harrowing voyage on ships contaminated with cholera.

B. Scott Holmes

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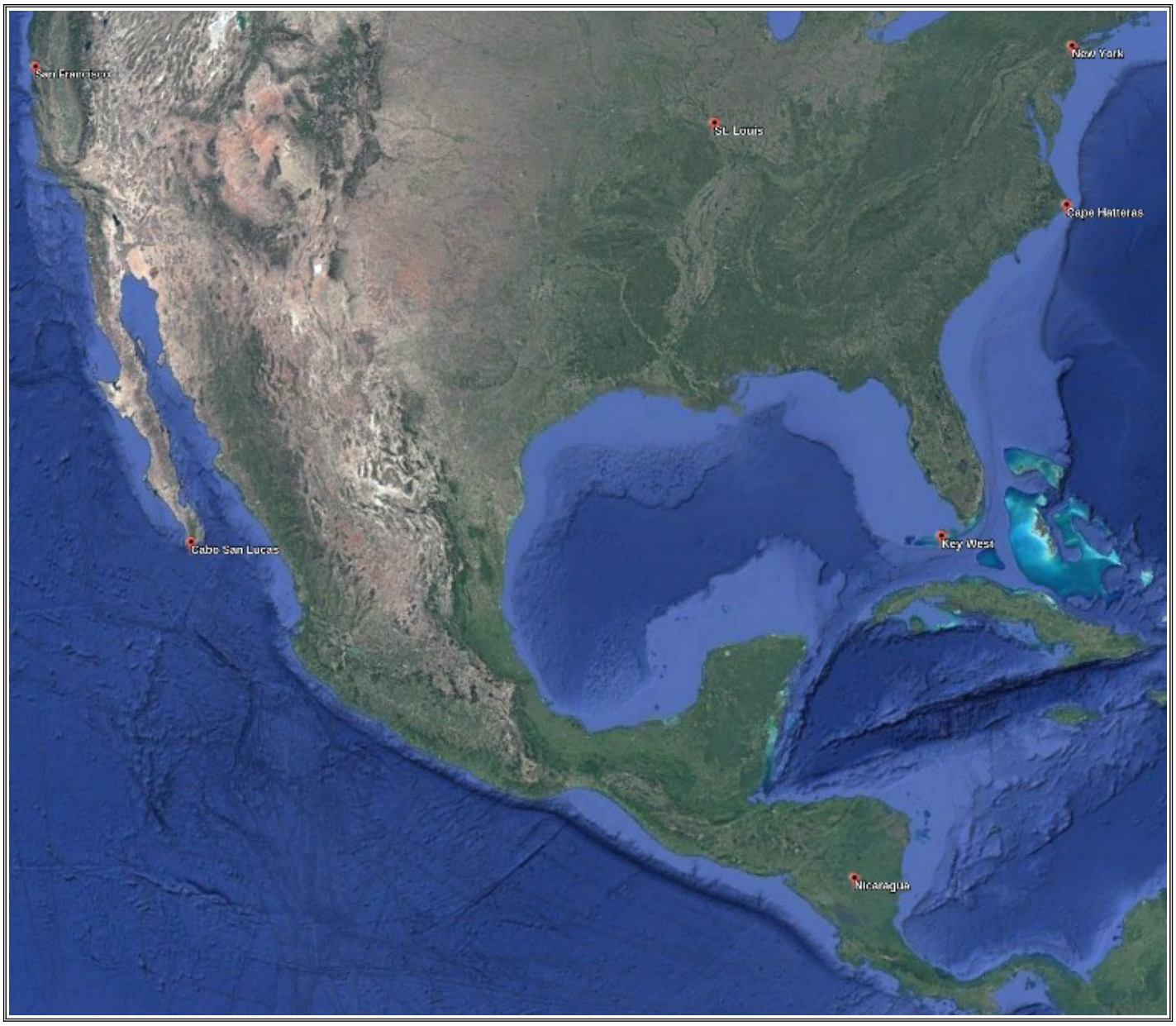
For all those interested in the *What, Where & When*.
The *Why* is too difficult and fraught with subjectiveness


New York
St. Louis
Cape Hatteras
Cabo San Lucas
Key West
Nicaragua

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Introduction:

Mark Twain was on the cusp of a new career. He had been a Mississippi Riverboat Pilot, he had tried mining for silver and gold and he had become a newspaper reporter, which frequently got him into trouble. Being a pilot was the only thing that left him satisfied but the Civil War put an end to that. For a brief time he hid out in the mining camps on the west slope of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Returning to San Francisco he was offered an assignment, *a delightful one. It was to go down to the Sandwich Islands and write some letters for the Sacramento Union, an excellent journal and liberal with employees.*

Whether because he was complying with his employer's imperative, which was to influence California public opinion in favor of American control of economic interests in the Islands, or because he believed it himself, Twain took up the American imperialist cause. He was in the islands from March 18 to July 19, arriving back in San Francisco August 13 having penned 25 letters.

I was home again, in San Francisco, without means and without employment. I tortured my brain for a saving scheme of some kind, and at last a public lecture occurred to me! I sat down and wrote one, in a fever of hopeful anticipation.

His first lecture was deemed a success, so he took it on the road through California mining towns and into Nevada, where he had become a newspaper man. Returning again to San Francisco, he took passage on a steamer to New York. This was not a pleasant journey as both the Pacific ship, the *America*, and the Atlantic ship, the *San Francisco* were contaminated with cholera. Crossing the Isthmus of Nicaragua he thought the country *was made to look at & travel through—but not to live in*

He arrived in New York January 12 and headed for the Mississippi River Valley in March, as much to visit family as to lecture. His lecture tour ended in May in New York. June 8, he was off on the Quaker City Expedition. By this time there were 37 states in the Union.

Arrive Home in San Francisco:

"Aug 13—San Francisco—Home again. No—not home again—in prison again—and all the wild sense of freedom gone. The city seems so cramped, & so dreary with toil & care & business anxiety. God help me, I wish I were at sea again!". [1]

Mark Twain had returned from the Sandwich Islands, now known as the Hawaiian Islands, August 13, 1866. He had been contracted by the Sacramento Union to write letters home. In total, he submitted 25 letters. He had been there from March 18 to July 19 of 1866.

> I was home again, in San Francisco, without means and without employment. I tortured my brain for a saving scheme of some kind, and at last a public lecture occurred to me! I sat down and wrote one, in a fever of hopeful anticipation. I showed it to several friends, but they all shook their heads. They said nobody would come to hear me, and I would make a humiliating failure of it. They said that as I had never spoken in public, I would break down in the delivery, anyhow. I was disconsolate now. But at last an editor slapped me on the back and told me to "go ahead." He said, " Take the largest house in town, and charge a dollar a ticket." The audacity of the proposition was charming; it seemed fraught with practical worldly wisdom, however. The proprietor of the several theatres endorsed the advice, and said I might have his handsome new opera-house at half price—fifty dollars. In sheer desperation I took it—on credit, for sufficient reasons. In three days I did a hundred and fifty dollars' worth of printing and advertising, and was the most distressed and frightened creature on the Pacific coast. I could not sleep—who could, under such circumstances? For other people there was facetiousness in the last line of my posters, but to me it was plaintive with a pang when I wrote it "*Doors open at 7 1/2. The trouble will begin at 8."* [2]

"Whilst in this state of apprehension he came upon Ross Browne in San Francisco and delightedly greeted him. 'Browne, you are just the man I want to see.' He explained his quandary and expressed his anxiety at not knowing how to approach an audience. Browne was by this time a well-known lecturer and could give him the desired direction. Accordingly, Browne invited Mark Twain home to Oakland with him for the few days previous to the lecture, and urged him to try out his material on his house-full of children. Needless to say, the result was gratifying. The enthusiastic response of the Brownes entirely fortified Mark Twain's courage" . [3]

It was John McComb of the Alta California who had encouraged him to push ahead and rent the largest theater in town.

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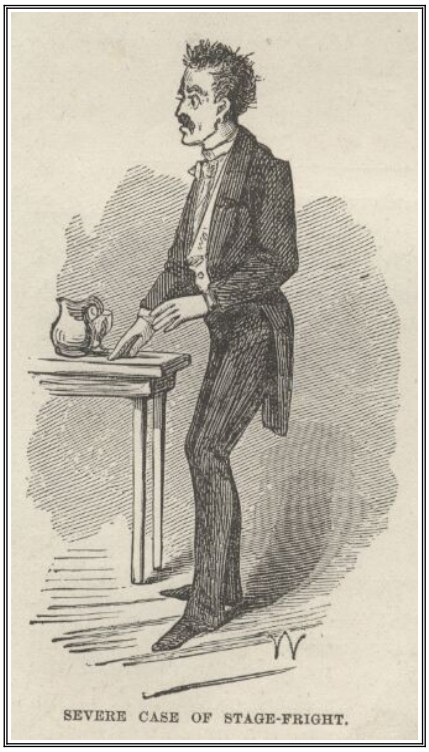
1 MTNJ p 163

2 RI p 559

3 DBD: September, mid to late – Although they'd traveled in the same regions, from the Mediterranean to the Mississippi to Washoe mining camps, there is no record before this month that Sam and J. Ross Browne ever met. Browne was a humorist in the Western vein of John Phoenix, Bret Harte, and Mark Twain. He was also an excellent travel writer, currently collecting mining statistics in the West for the U.S. Treasury Department. He was living with his family in Oakland. Note: some scholars have asserted that Browne served literary influence on Sam; Gribben lists one thesis and two of Browne's articles, one series "A Peep at Washoe" that Sam had recommended to his family and in a letter he wrote jointly with Orion to the Keokuk Gate City, May 10, 1862. According to Francis J. Rock, the meeting happened shortly after Sam's return from the Sandwich Islands and when Sam was preparing for his first platform appearance at the Academy of Music on Oct. 2.

Sam's first stage appearance took place at the Academy of Music on Pine Street in San Francisco, a new hall owned by Tom Maguire, who suggested Sam try to make his fortune by entering the lecture field and offering his experiences in the Sandwich Islands. The city's elite arrived in force, including the Governor of California. Sam charged a dollar a seat and grossed $1,200 (his net profit after splitting with Maguire and expenses—$400.) Sam later described the event in Chapter 78 of *Roughing It*. In the lecture Sam told the audience that: …his object in delivering this lecture was to obtain funds which would enable him to publish an account of the Sandwich Islands in the form of a volume, with illustrations by Edward Jump, a French-born caricaturist, San Francisco's favorite, who later made a living as a portrait artist.

As those three days of suspense dragged by, I grew more and more unhappy. I had sold two hundred tickets among my personal friends, but I feared they might not come. My lecture, which had seemed "humorous" to me, at first, grew steadily more and more dreary, till not a vestige of fun seemed left, and I grieved that I could not bring a coffin on the stage and turn the thing into a funeral. I was so panic-stricken, at last, that I went to three old friends, giants in stature, cordial by nature, and stormy-voiced, and said:



SEVERE CASE OF STAGE-FRIGHT.

"This thing is going to be a failure; the jokes in it are so dim that nobody will ever see them; I would like to have you sit in the parquette, and help me through."

They said they would. Then I went to the wife of a popular citizen, and said that if she was willing to do me a very great kindness, I would be glad if she and her husband would sit prominently in the left-hand stage- box, where the whole house could see them. I explained that I should need help, and would turn toward her and smile, as a signal, when I had been delivered of an obscure joke—"and then," I added, "don't wait to investigate, but respond!"

She promised. Down the street I met a man I never had seen before. He had been drinking, and was beaming with smiles and good nature. He said:

"My name's Sawyer. You don't know me, but that don't matter. I haven't got a cent, but if you knew how bad I wanted to laugh, you'd give me a ticket. Come, now, what do you say?"

"Is your laugh hung on a hair-trigger?—that is, is it critical, or can you get it off easy?"

My drawling infirmity of speech so affected him that he laughed a specimen or two that struck me as being about the article I wanted, and I gave him a ticket, and appointed him to sit in the second circle, in the centre, and be responsible for that division of the house. I gave him minute instructions about how to detect indistinct jokes, and then went away, and left him chuckling placidly over the novelty of the idea.

I ate nothing on the last of the three eventful days—I only suffered. I had advertised that on this third day the box-office would be opened for the sale of reserved seats. I crept down to the theater at four in the afternoon to see if any sales had been made. The ticket seller was gone, the box-office was locked up. I had to swallow suddenly, or my heart would have got out. “No sales,” I said to myself; “I might have known it.” I thought of suicide, pretended illness, flight. I thought of these things in earnest, for I was very miserable and scared. But of course I had to drive them away, and prepare to meet my fate. I could not wait for half-past seven—I wanted to face the horror, and end it—the feeling of many a man doomed to hang, no doubt. I went down back streets at six o’clock, and entered the theatre by the back door. I stumbled my way in the dark among the ranks of canvas scenery, and stood on the stage. The house was gloomy and silent, and its emptiness depressing. I went into the dark among the scenes again, and for an hour and a half gave myself up to the horrors, wholly unconscious of everything else. Then I heard a murmur; it rose higher and higher, and ended in a crash, mingled with cheers. It made my hair raise, it was so close to me, and so loud.

There was a pause, and then another; presently came a third, and before I well knew what I was about, I was in the middle of the stage, staring at a sea of faces, bewildered by the fierce glare of the lights, and quaking in every limb with a terror that seemed like to take my life away. The house was full, aisles and all!

The tumult in my heart and brain and legs continued a full minute before I could gain any command over myself. Then I recognized the charity and the friendliness in the faces before me, and little by little my fright melted away, and I began to walk. Within three or four minutes I was comfortable, and even content. My three chief allies, with three auxiliaries, were on hand, in the parquette, all sitting together, all armed with bludgeons, and all ready to make an onslaught upon the feeblest joke that might show its head. And whenever a joke did fall, their bludgeons came down and their faces seemed to split from ear to ear.

Sawyer, whose hearty countenance was seen looming redly in the centre of the second circle, took it up, and the house was carried handsomely. Inferior jokes never fared so royally before. Presently I delivered a bit of serious matter with impressive unction (it was my pet), and the audience listened with an absorbed hush that gratified me more than any applause; and as I dropped the last word of the clause, I happened to turn and catch Mrs. —‘s intent and waiting eye; my conversation with her flashed upon me, and in spite of all I could do I smiled. She took it for the signal, and promptly delivered a mellow laugh that touched off the whole audience; and the explosion that followed was the triumph of the evening. I thought that that honest man Sawyer would choke himself; and as for the bludgeons, they performed like pile-drivers. But my poor little morsel of pathos was ruined. It was taken in good faith as an intentional joke, and the prize one of the entertainment, and I wisely let it go at that.

> All the papers were kind in the morning; my appetite returned; I had a abundance of money. All's well that ends well. [4]

Scharnhorst maintains that Twain's description of his first lecture was ...

> A pretty tale, but demonstrably stretched. For days in advance all of the San Francisco newspapers had puffed his appearance and reported that the lecture was a sellout. Many attendees, "unable to obtain seats, ranged themselves in a standing posture against the walls." The next day the Morning Call, in fact, urged Sam to repeat the lecture at the earliest possible date because so "many ladies and gentlemen ... failed to obtain admission" and others who might have attended had been discouraged by the muddy streets. ... His detractors—who claimed that he had failed to speak loudly enough to be heard throughout the hall or that his earthly humor was too coarse to be enjoyed by respectable women—intimated that the flattering reviews were written by critics intimidated by Sams reputation into praising his performance lest he retaliate. Sam responded by bragging he had "the consolation of slapping my pocket and hearing their money jingle. They have their opinions, and I have their dollars."[5]

Academy of Music on Pine Street

From Lois Foster Rodecape:

> In the spring of 1864 Maguire built another fine new theatre in San Francisco, on Pine Street just below Montgomery. In selecting this location, Maguire was following the already evident trend of theatrical interest southward toward Market Street. The older Opera House and Metropolitan, with entrances on right-angling streets, were semi-adjacent at a distance of a city block from old Portsmouth Square; but the newer Eureka was several blocks to the south, and now Maguire's Academy of Music was, again, semi-adjacent to this little theatre which Maguire had appropriated for a period.
>
> Maguire's new Academy of Music was the eleventh theatre Tom Maguire had erected on the Pacific Coast. Eight of these had been located in San Francisco, two in Sacramento, and one in Virginia City. All of these play-houses had been "elegant" in the manner of the day, but the Academy was designed to be the jewel of them all. Its cost, $66,000 exclusive of a lot priced at $30,000, represented a direct investment of cash, for in its construction Maguire followed a policy, unusual even in that day, of settling all bills punctually every week, so that his theatre was entirely paid for at the end of the three and a half months of construction.
>
> A reporter attached to the Call (Mark Twain was probably not yet in action, but had already joined or was within a few days to join its staff) reviewed the architecture of the Academy just before its opening to the public:

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4 RI pp 560-3
5 Scharnhorst pp 351-2

It has a marble front in imitation of the Italian style, and rises in four stories from the sidewalk. .. . The second story rests on twelve iron Corinthian columns, above which is a balustrade, crowned with a rich pediment supported on two elaborately carved columns. The third and fourth stories are highly ornamented with richly capped windows . .. and the building surmounted with a superbly chaste composite cornice. . . .Exquisite taste displayed throughout … resembles Niblo's, in New York... . Seats...to be covered with scarlet plush. A celebrated painting, known as "The Age of Gold," has been taken as a model for the drop-scene, or "act drop." It will be larger and more elaborately executed than the well known dancing scene at Maguire's Opera House and a greater number of figures will be introduced. . . . The ornamentation about the proscenium-boxes is extremely chaste and beautiful. Heavy Doric pillars of pure white, with golden ornaments, spring from the stage on each side of these gorgeous private boxes, while superb and costly drapery is tastefully disposed about their entrances... .

The walls are perforated with no less than sixty patent ventilators. . . . Light is obtained from a large and splendid chandelier, pendant from the dome. . . . Besides the fifty jets there contained, each tier of boxes [three in all] is fringed with a row of brilliant lights. …

No one could have foreseen the dismal failure of this beautiful but ill-fated playhouse. It is said that Maguire's wife was strongly opposed to its erection, as was his architect, Huling Majors. [6]

6 Rodecape no. 1

California Lectures:

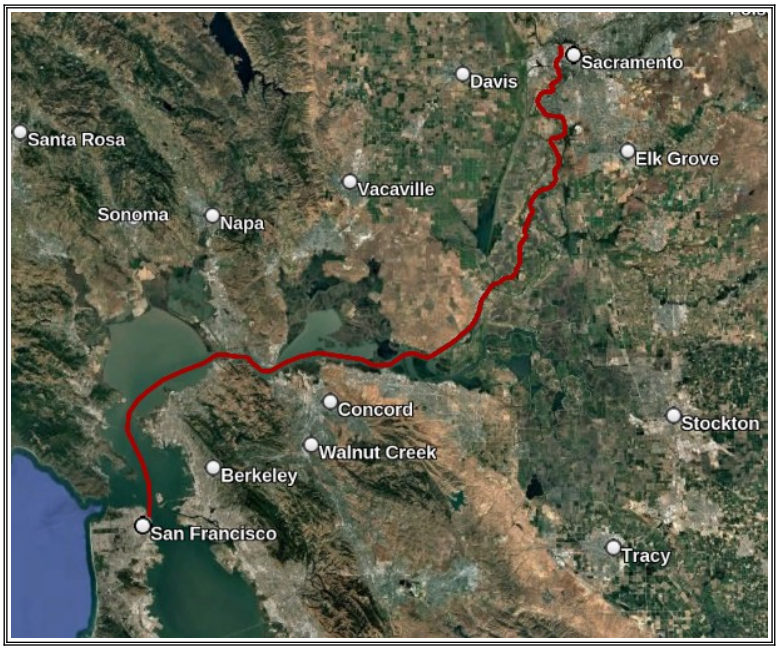
It would appear from the accounts of Mark Twain's biographers and from Mark Twain's own account in *Roughing It* and elsewhere that the San Francisco lecture of October 2, 1866, was planned as an isolated event, and that the interval between the decision to lecture and the lecture itself was a matter of only a few days.

The probability is, however, that the decision to lecture in various California and Nevada towns was made in advance of October 2, and that by this date at least some of the arrangements had already been made or were in progress. [7]

Metropolitan Hall in Sacramento on October 11

The trip from San Francisco to Sacramento was made by river boat, Mark Twain choosing this type of transportation rather than stagecoach not only for nostalgic reasons, remembering his Mississippi steamboat days, but because it was more comfortable, more scenic, and because the boat had a bar. [8]

The trip was possibly aboard the steamboat *Capital*.

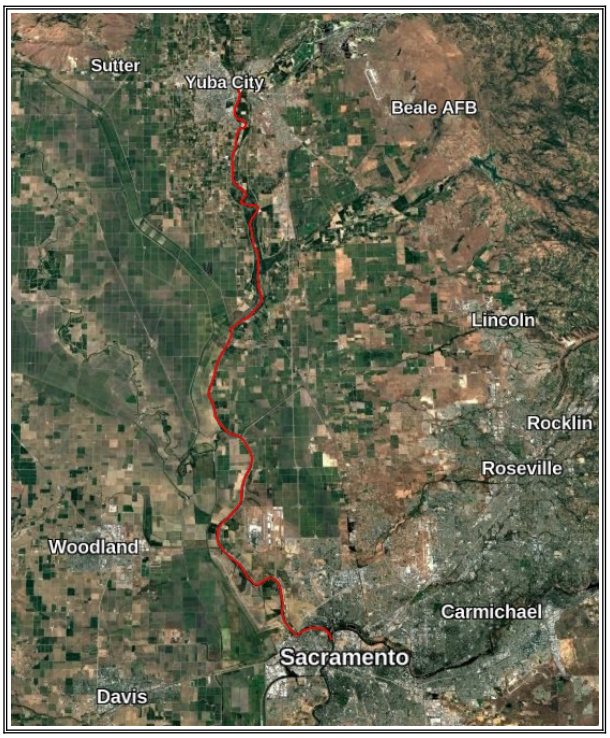


In 1893, the Metropolitan Theatre was located on K Street between 4th and 5th Streets. It was in operation from at least 1859 until 1893.
The north side of K Street between 4th and 5th Streets had a concentration of businesses named "Metropolitan" in 1893. The Metropolitan Building stood on the northwest corner of K and 5th, the Metropolitan Cigar Manufactory operated on the corner of 5th and K, and the Metropolitan Cafe, run by Mrs. E.J.C. Ketchum, at 427 1/2 K Street. The Metropolitan Theatre stood on the north side of K between 4th and 5th at 421 K Street.
In 1893, Mrs. E.J.C. Ketchum operated the Metropolitan Theatre, with an office at 427 ½ K Street. The acting manager was J.H Todd.
The Metropolitan Theatre was razed. A northern extension of the Chinatown Mall, located between K and J Streets, later occupied the site, including a Century Theatres multiplex. [9]

Steamship Flora, From Scramento to Marysville:

From Sacramento Sam and his front man headed east to the interior mining towns, They steamed inland on the *Flora* to Marysville on the Feather River—

7 Lorch pg. 35
8 Ibid.
9 Pacific Coast Architecture Database (PCAD)



Flora (sternwheel steamer): The ship was built for the company's trade with Marysville, and thus had an exceptionally shallow draft of 11 inches. She was launched in 1865, acquired by the California Pacific Railroad Company in 1871.

The California Steam Navigation Company was formed in 1854 to consolidate competing steamship companies in the San Francisco Bay Area and on the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers. It was successful in this effort and established a profitable near-monopoly which it maintained by buying out or bankrupting new competitors. While the California Steam Navigation Company was successful throughout its life in suppressing steamboat competition on its core Bay Area and river routes, it could not control the rise of railroads. These new competitors reduced the company's revenue and profit. Finally, in 1871, the company's assets were purchased by the California Pacific Railroad, and the corporation was dissolved. *Wikipedia*

Maguire's, Marysville, October 15:

Sam thought it was "the most generally well built town in California'—where he "gave the best satisfaction" to "a very respectable audience" on the evening of October 15, Maguire's New Theatre, Marysville

In August he (Tom Maguire) was the optimistic manager of three dramatic companies, an opera troupe, and a minstrel company. He was, moreover, the major proprietor of still another Maguire-built theatre, opened at Marysville, California, on August 16 (1865) by the San Francisco Opera House company. The "handsome and commodious building," which cost $21,500 and was said to have been modeled upon the ill-fated Academy of Music in San Francisco, [10]

Grass Valley, October 20:

They then took a stage to Grass Valley, traveling through gold boomtowns, Timbuctoo, Smartsville, and Rough and Ready. Sam gave the lecture in Hamilton Hall on October 20. The town reminded Sam "of Virginia City in

10 Rodecape, no. 1

her palmy days," particularly because he met "a great many old time Washoe miners,' some of whom were "doing remarkably well."

The Grass Valley Daily Union reported:
Crowds are flocking into Hamilton Hall, as we write, to hear Mark Twain's lecture….But a moment ago we saw the lecturer preparing himself for a clear voice with a copious dose of gin and gam, after which he started for the Hall with the irregular movement of a stern-wheel boat in a heavy wind… [11]

The Daily Hawaiian Herald ran the following on Nov. 16 about the Grass Valley lecture:
CHARACTERISTIC. – The following is the conclusion of Mark Twain's advertisement for his lecture delivered lately in Grass Valley:
"After the lecture is over the lecturer will perform the following wonderful feats on SLEIGHT OF HAND. if desired to do so: "At a given signal, he will go out with any gentleman and take a drink. If desired, he will repeat this unique and interesting feat—repeat it until the audience are satisfied that there is no deception about it. "At a moment's warning he will depart out of town and leave his hotel bill unsettled. He has performed this ludicrous trick many hundreds of times in San Francisco and elsewhere, and it has always elicited the most enthusiastic comments. "At any hour of the night, after ten, the lecturer will go through any house in the city, no matter how dark it may be, and take an inventory of its contents, and not miss as many of the articles as the owner will in the morning. "The lecturer declines to specify any more of his miraculous feats at present, for fear of getting the police too much interested in his circus" [12].

Sam and McCarthy are said to have stayed in the now historic Holbrooke Hotel, Grass Valley.

Nevada City, October 23:

Sam gave the lecture in the Nevada Theatre in Nevada City, California, a short distance from Grass Valley. Sam stayed at the National Exchange Hotel. The local newspaper Transcript wrote: "Mark Twain" as a lecturer is far superior to "Artemus Ward" or any of that class….We bespeak for him large audiences wherever he goes . [13]

The Nevada Theatre, also known as the Cedar Theatre, located in downtown Nevada City, California, is California's oldest existing theater building. Its principal periods of significance were 1850–1874, 1875–1899, 1900–1924, and 1925–1949. It is situated on ancestral Nisenan land. *Wikipedia*

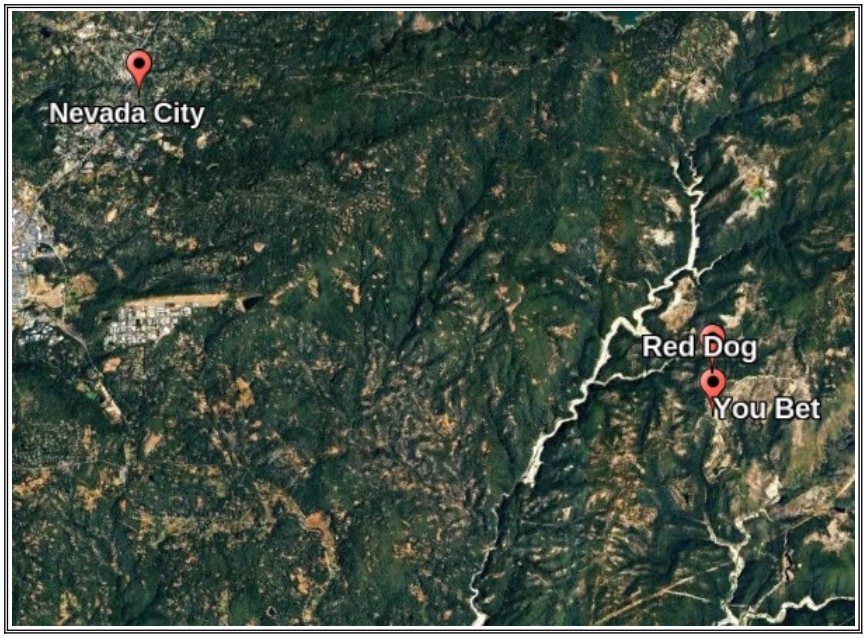
The Bicknell Block, constructed in stages between 1854-57: three common-walled buildings of a simple construction and embellished with Classical Revival ornamentation. In 1856, Dr. Bicknell leased his "commodious and strictly fireproof bricks" to hotelmen Pearson and Haley who, on Aug. 26, 1856, opened their new hotel, named the National Exchange – "handsomely fitted up to accommodate permanent and transient boarders in style unsurpassed in the state." *The National Exchange Hotel*

Red Dog, October 24:

Sam and McCarthy rode horseback to Red Dog, California and lectured at the Odd Fellows Hall.The town started as a mine and campsite called Red Dog Hill. Three young men, all under 22, founded it. The youngest, a 15-year-old gold seeker, gave it its name. As more gold was found, the campsite grew into a settlement. Soon, it became a town with 2,000 people. Eventually, the town was left empty. Today, the Red Dog Townsite is still important. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. *Kiddle*

11 DBD October 20, 1866
12 Ibid.
13 DBD October 23, 1866

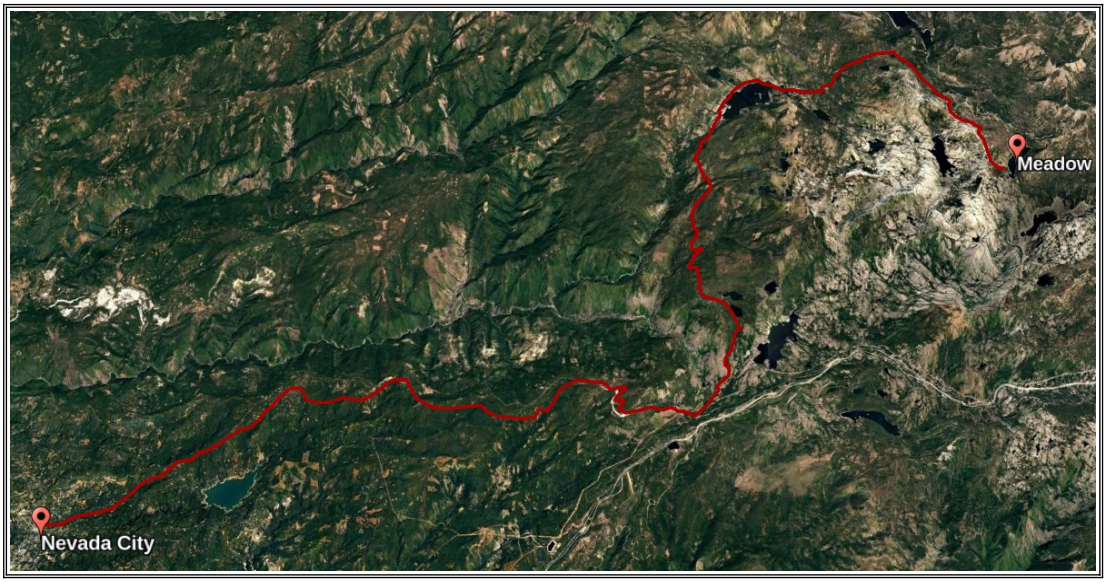
You Bet, October 25:



Sam lectured in You Bet, Calif. On their way back to the Exchange Hotel on horseback, Sam and McCarthy became lost in a dense thicket and wandered about until dawn. [14]

The mining town of You Bet was established during the California Gold Rush, principally by miners from across Birdseye Canyon in the nearby town of Waloupa, California, which itself had been founded just to the south in 1852. As its diggings played out, miners began moving about a half a mile to the north, to the other side of Birdseye Canyon. Lazarus Beard opened a saloon there in 1857. According to local lore, the Waloupa miners gathered one day in Beard's saloon to name the new town. His favorite phrase was "you bet". Whenever Beard was asked about a proposed name, he would reply "you bet." After much drinking, the miners decided that You Bet sounded just right.

The town grew quickly. Soon, several stage lines connected it with Nevada City and other mining areas. By 1864, the town had 40–50 buildings, including hotels, stores, shops and saloons. That year, a schoolhouse was built between Red Dog, about 1 mile to the north, and You Bet with monies raised by subscription. A post office was established in 1868 and served the community until 1903. *Wikipedia*



Meadow Lake:

Sam and McCarthy spent the night of October 26th in Meadow Lake, the mining camp where his brother Orion had lived for a short time, though Sam did not lecture there. It would not have paid.

Mark Twain wrote of Meadow Lake to the San Francisco Bulletin, December 6, 1866:

14 DBD October 25, 1866

We traveled by stage to Meadow Lake, over a villainous road, which usually led through beautiful picturesque mountain scenery, variegated with taverns, where they charge reasonable rates for dinners and get them up satisfactorily.[15]

We reached the town of Meadow Lake at 9 P. M. It is built on a level plat of ground shut in by rugged mountains well clad with heavy timber. The lake itself is a handsome sheet of water a mile long and perhaps a quarter of a mile wide. Meadow Lake is the prettiest site for a town I know of; and the town already built there is the wildest exemplar of the spirit of speculation I have ever stumbled upon. Here you find Washoe recklessness and improvidence repeated: A lot of highly promising but unprospected ledges, and behold! on such guarantees as these they have built a handsome town and painted it neatly, and planned wide, long streets, and got ready for a rush of business, and then--jumped aboard the stage coaches and deserted it! And they have done all this on what? Why, if I am correctly informed, only three or four mines are barely opened, and all the bullion ever shipped from this place would not foot up $30,000. Yet all this bad business was the work of men who had done such things before, and been scorched at Kern River, Gold Lake, Washoe and other theatres of fierce mining excitement. Here is a really handsome town, built of two-story frame houses--a town capable of housing 3,000 persons with ease, and how many inhabitants has it got? A hundred! You can have a house all to yourself merely by promising to take care of it. The place is perfectly citified with signs. There are the inevitable "Bank Exchanges" and Metropolitan Hotels, and wholesale hardware stores, printing, and lawyers' and doctors' offices, and restaurants and billiard saloons of a pretentious city. One man has even had the temerity to build a large, handsome dressed stone house, at great expense. A bright, new, pretty town, all melancholy and deserted, and yet showing not one sign of decay or dilapidation! I never saw the like before.

The people who are there have strong faith in the ultimate prosperity of the place, though, and from all I hear I am a good deal of their opinion myself. Their rock pays all the way from $15 to $50 in free gold, and the sulphurets (they seem to be of an unusually rebellious character,) are uncommonly rich. Machinery has lately been erected there for working them, and my opinion that experimenting on those things outside of Swansea is a frittering away of valuable time, is not entitled to consideration, and is nothing against the enterprise.

There are five quartz mills in Meadow Lake, and they are jogging along comfortably and doing very well with the free gold. They shipped $4,000 one month, $6,000 another, and expected in October to yield $10,000. There is no question but that the leads are good, and there is also no question but that Meadow Lake can easily support its present population; but that they should go and provide house-room for 3,000 people so very early in the day was rather foolish. Wood is as cheap as dirt there, and water is plenty. Snow falls to the depth of six feet in winter, but the mill men do not seriously object to that, because it is easier to haul wood and quartz in sleds than in wagons. The winter cannot be

15 It is possible that the stagecoach followed the Henness Pass Road.

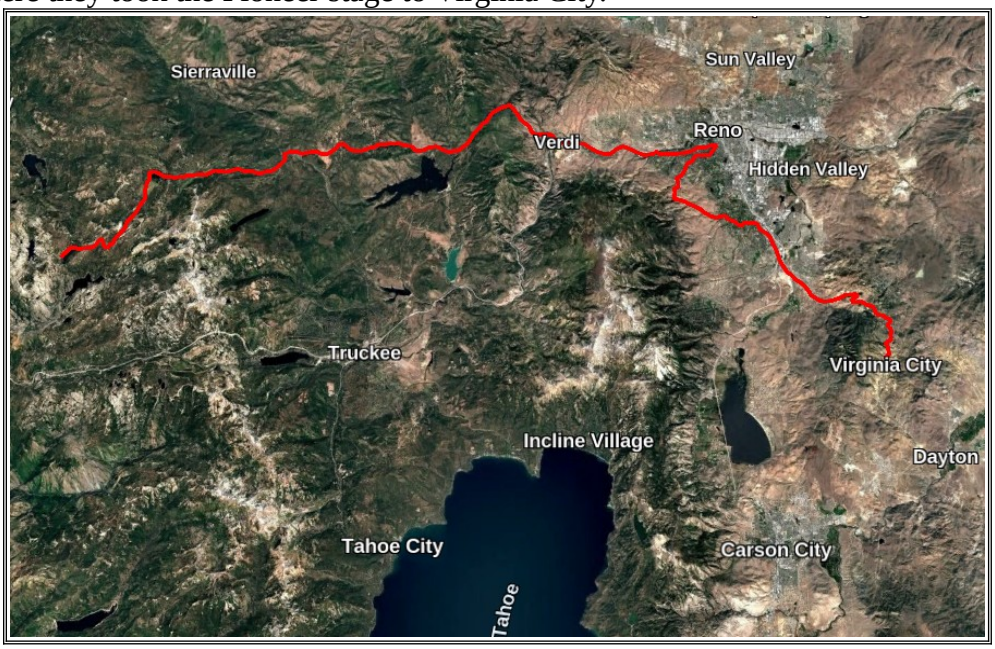
> excessively cold, else the snow would not fall so freely. It is expected that the camp will be as lively and populous as ever in the spring. [16]

They left Meadow Lake the next morning in an overcrowded stagecoach— "we had 14 passengers" and "there was comfortable room for 9"—for Sam's triumphant return to Virginia City, from which he had fled in disgrace two years earlier. "We know there will be jollification when 'Mark Twain' reaches Virginia City," his friends at the San Francisco Dramatic Chronicle tittered, although "we hope he won't get so fond of his old home as to be unwilling to return' to the City by the Bay."

16 SFB December 6, 1866

Nevada Lectures:

Departing Meadow Lake (Nevada County) they traveled south to Cisco (formerly Heaton Station, Placer County). From there they took the Pioneer stage to Virginia City. [17]



They spent the next two weeks in the vicinity, with Sam delivering his Sandwich Islands lecture six times within a twenty-mile radius. “I did not observe any very great changes in Nevada,” he reported in the Bulletin. “There were many teams on the roads, and the towns looked about as they formerly did. Virginia bore quite a business-like aspect, and it was said that she was enjoying a very fair degree of prosperity. Business there now is on a good, firm, healthy basis, and is steadily recovering from the lapse brought upon her by speculation.”

Maguires in Virginia City

October 31 - Maguire's Opera House, Virginia City, Nevada

While Sam had been away in San Francisco [May to July of 1863], the impresario Tom Maguire, a former cab driver and gambler, had built a sixteen-hundred-seat theater on D Street near Union in Virginia City patterned after his opulent opera house in San Francisco, and it was routinely crowded with folks eager to see such popular local favorites as Lotta Crabtree, Julia Dean Hayne, and Frank Mayo. Maguire reserved the front row, the ‘printers’ pew,” for reporters, and Mayo was so friendly with the staff of the Enterprise that he later claimed he based “all that is quaint and

17 Scharnhorst Page 357-61

humorous” in his leading role in Frank H. Murdoch’s frontier melodrama Davy Crockett (1873) on Sam and “all that is sweet, wholesome, and lovable” in the role on Joe Goodman.[18]

Harvard Theatre Collection - Menken, Mazeppa, TCS 19.jpg

When Maguire's Opera House first opened, in July 1863, Maguire and his representatives sought to cement good relations with the leading Virginia City newspaper, the Enterprise. Joseph Goodman, its editor, was awarded poster and program printing, generous advertising, and a permanently reserved row of seats in the Opera House for the exclusive use of his staff. All was merry, and the quips of the reporters only added to public interest in the fine new theatre. Often the three carefree reporters attended a show en bloc, competing for the honor of reviewing it, or selecting the high points of each man's criticism for one splendid comprehensive article.

When Adah Isaacs Menken was announced at the local Opera House, in March of 1864, Virginia City was eager and boisterous in its desire to view the “naked lady” who had enjoyed such wide publicity and comment in San Francisco. But Goodman, Dan de Quille, and Mark Twain turned capricious: they decided that The Menken was fair game for their best humor, and were determined to take her down several pegs.

Then The Menken appeared at the Opera House and completely captivated her avowed persecutors. Joseph Goodman, as superior in command, preempted the happy task of rhapsodizing over her charms, and the review of her opening performance rang with effusive praise.

18 Ibid page 199

Instead of pleasing the Opera House players, this procedure seems to have aroused a certain resentment, which might have sprung from suspicion of a deep irony or even from jealousy. For, after the fashion of the times, the actors took it upon themselves to refer rather familiarly to Goodman and his enthusiastic review in ad lib “gags”—the bane and the delight of the theatre in that day. Angered in turn, the Enterprise reporters demanded a public apology from Charles Graves, Maguire’s manager. The Menken, too, was incensed and, upon Graves’ refusal to comply, she disappointed a huge audience by declining to play with the supporting troupe. The next night, relenting, she is said to have been rewarded by an effusive paean from the pen of Mark Twain. Her engagement ran on, triumphantly, but at its close Graves resorted to punitive measures in an attempt to get the Enterprise in hand—withdrew from that newspaper all printing, advertising, and complimentary theatre tickets.

A feud developed; the Enterprise reporters ignored all activities at the Opera House, except when an opportunity for ridicule seemed to open. The occasional reviews of productions which the critics deigned to attend (and pay to see) were caustic to the point of cruelty, and Virginia City appearances were soon anticipated with fear and trembling by Maguire’s actors. Such stars as Fanny Brown, George Pauncefort, Walter Montgomery, and Emily Thorne turned tail before the storm of abuse dealt them by the Enterprise, and finally the theatre had to be closed. Eventually Graves was transferred by Maguire to less troubled waters and the required apology to the newspaper was forthcoming, But Maguire and the Opera House had suffered financially and in dignity.

For many weeks the house was almost continuously dark. Finally Maguire relinquished it to Max Walter, whose local Music Hall had been destroyed by fire in September 1866. In the early spring of 1867 Maguire sold the fine Virginia City theatre to John Piper for a sum reported “not exceeding $2,500, and this, we believe, to satisfy attachments and mortgages.”"

The disaster may have been hastened by other factors in addition to the caprice of the Enterprise staff; but the sequence has a dramatic character not more amazing than others in the “Napoleon’s” career. [19]

Carson City

On October 29, Sam wrote from Virginia City to Robert M. Howland, an old friend from his Nevada mining days, asking if Carson City would turn out to hear Sam lecture. Sam was unsure of the reception he would get there, due to the Sanitary Ball miscegenation prank. [20]

On November 1, Sam sent a telegraph to Abraham V.Z. Curry, John Neely Johnson, Robert M. Howland and others to confirm he would be in Carson City the next day to speak there on Saturday evening. Howland had sent Sam a letter dated Oct. 30 with over 100 signatures of prominent Carson City citizens who wanted to hear

19 Rodecape no. 2
20 See To Robert M. Howland, 29 October 1866 • Virginia City, Nev. *(MS: NvHi, UCCL 00107*

Sam's "Sandwich Islands" lecture. The list included Henry Goode Blasdel, Governor of Nevada. Sam wrote to him, agreeing to speak on the stage of the Carson Theatre and:

"…disgorge a few lines and as much truth as I can pump out without damaging my constitution… [signed]. Ex-Gov. Third House and late Independent Missionary to the Sandwich Islands" [21]

November 3 – Carson Theatre, Carson City, Nevada

He spent a couple of days after the Carson lecture with McCarthy "rusticating' at Lake Tahoe rather than compete with the excitement of state and federal elections on November 6, when Blasdel was reelected governor.

Washoe City

November 7 - Washoe City, Nevada
They arrived in Washoe City in time for Sam's lecture on the evening of November 7, and he was impressed by the 'lively business" there. Tom Fitch had booked the Washoe County Courthouse for Sam's talk and Fitch both collected admission at the door and introduced the speaker, Though an audience of about two hundred enjoyed the lecture, Fitch remembered, Sam was "not quite satisfied with the result." He asked Fitch whether "as a lecturer I am a fraud," and Fitch replied in the affirmative, "I suspected as much," Sam confessed, before adding, on a more hopeful note, that "there are over 500 towns in the United States of more than 5000 inhabitants, and I can play them all once."

Sam lectured the next two nights in Dayton and Silver City. He planned to close his tour in Gold Hill the night of November 10, then return to San Francisco and depart for New York on November 19. Sam's "fame travels before him," the Territorial Enterprise reported, praising "his humorous yet interesting, instructive and beautiful description of his sojourn" to Hawaii.

Dayton

November 8 Thursday – Sam gave the "Sandwich Islands" lecture at Dayton, Nevada, probably at the Odeon Hall Saloon, where Sam sometimes drank and played billiards. He returned to Virginia City "about 12 in the evening…from Dayton". [22]

Dayton's oldest saloon, originally opened in 1863. The Odeon Saloon is among the most historically significant landmarks in the state, and is once again a cultural hub in the community. Odeon is an ancient Greek word meaning a building for singing, dancing, music, and poetry. *Odeon Saloon*

Silver City

November 9 - Silver City, Nevada
Silver City was among the earliest settlements in the Comstock region and was a thriving community by 1860. With an initial population of 564, the town soon had four hotels, several saloons, about 20 stores, boarding houses, and numerous residences. At its height, Silver City had a population of 1,200. The town also provided boarding facilities for animals used to haul ore-laden wagons between the Comstock mines and mills along the Carson River.

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21 See To Henry G. Blasdel and Others,1 November 1866 • Virginia City, Nev.*(Virginia City Territorial Enterprise, 4 Nov 66, UCCL 00109)*

22 DBD November 8, 1866

The *Virginia and Truckee Railroad*, which bypassed Silver City to the west, was completed in 1869. The railroad ended the town's role as an important freight center and contributed to its eventual decline. *Wikipedia*

Gold Hill:

November 10 Saturday – Sam gave the "Sandwich Islands" lecture at the Gold Hill Theatre, Gold Hill, Nevada. McCarthy collected about a hundred dollars in admission fees at the door, but Sam was upstaged after the lecture by several friends, including George Birdsall, Steve Gillis, Jack Perry, and one or two other members of the Virginia police force, who played a practical joke on him. At about midnight, as they were crossing the Divide between Gold Hill and Virginia City—the site of many a theft in the past—Sam and McCarthy, who was in on the joke, were ambushed by highwaymen in masks and robbed of the box office receipts that McCarthy was carrying, plus twenty or twenty-five dollars in Sam's pocket, two jackknives, three pencils, and the gold watch presented to him by Sandy Baldwin and Theodore Winters in January 1864, Sam reacted impulsively because, as the Gold Hill News observed the next day, "when a fellow has a pistol stuck in his ear it is rather hard for him to make sage calculations whether it is a practical joke or not."

The Enterprise revealed the next day that Sam might have suspected a practical joke. This elaborate plan of Steve Gillis to keep Sam in Virginia City for more lectures did not pan out. Sam was told about the hoax. Sam was ill again, and after a day's rest in Virginia City, left for San Francisco. Gillis, in 1907, claimed everyone was in on the prank except De Quille and Goodman—the former was needed to write up a realistic account, and the latter frowned on practical jokes. Among the band of robbers, Gillis named the chief of police George Birdsall (who wanted to "insure the proper performance of the hold-up," Leslie Blackburn, "Jimmy" Edington, Pat Holland and one or two unnamed others.

William R. Gillis' 1930 account in Gold Rush Days with Mark Twain, identifies others involved:
Steve then hunted up Joe Harlowe, Little Hicks, Salty Boardman and John Russell, and they, too, became members of the Gang. Joe Harlowe and Hicks were to do the robbing, while Boardman and Russell were to remain in the shade so that Sam could distinguish them through the darkness. Steve was to wait in the composing room to receive Sam after the holdup. [23]

Founded in 1859 after a gold strike was made south of Mount Davidson. Gold Hill became one of Comstock's most prosperous towns, while Twain was in Virginia City, with a population of about 3,000 people. By the 1870s, more than 10,000 people lived there, merging with Virginia City. The area soon declined and is now little more than a ghost town.

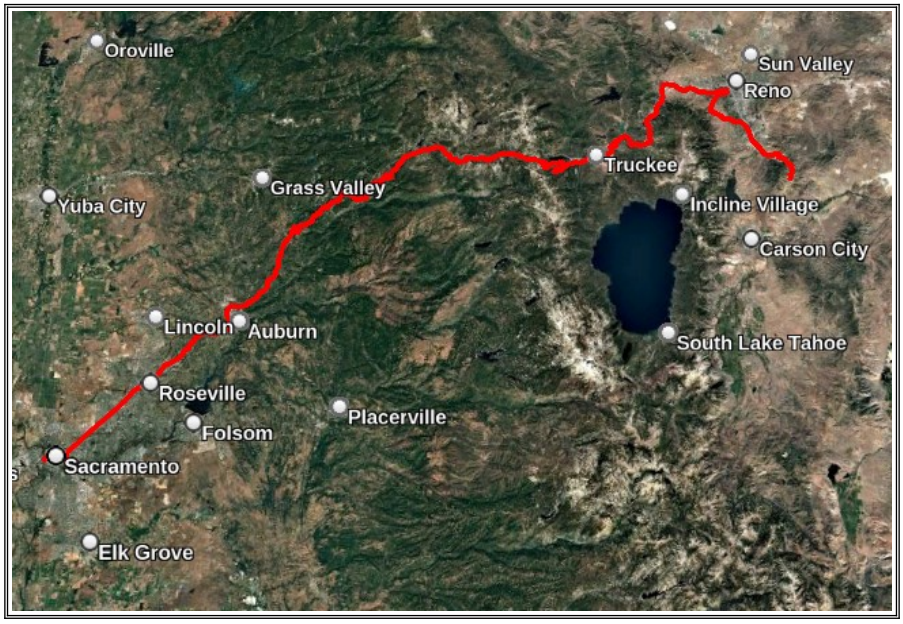
Departing Virginia City:

November 11 Sunday – Sam's CARD TO THE HIGHWAYMEN ran in the Enterprise:

> Last night I lectured in Gold Hill, on the Sandwich Islands. At ten o'clock I started on foot to Virginia, to meet a lot of personal friends who were going to set up all night with me and start me off in good shape for San Francisco in the morning. This social programme proved my downfall. But for it, I would have remained in Gold Hill. As we "raised the hill" and straightened up on the "Divide," a man just ahead of us (Mac, my agent, and myself), blew an ordinary policemen's whistle, and Mac said, "Thunder! this is an improvement—they didn't use to keep policemen on the Divide." I coincided. The infernal whistle was only a signal to you road agents. About half a minute afterwards, a small man emerged from some ambuscade or other and crowded close up to me. I was smoking and supposed he

23 DBD November 10, 1866 [Sanborn 305-6; MTL 1: 366n4 for details of the "robbery," or read Steve Gillis' 1907 deathbed "confession" account in The Twainian, Jan-Feb 1956 p3].

wanted a light. But this humorist instead of asking for a light, thrust a horrible six-shooter in my face and simply said, “Stand and deliver!” I said, “My son, your arguments are powerful —take what I have, but uncock that infamous pistol.” The young man uncocked the pistol (but he requested three other gentlemen to present theirs at my head) and then he took all the money I had ($20 or $25), and my watch. Then he said to one of his party, “Beauregard, go through that man!”—meaning Mac—and the distinguished rebel did go through Mac. Then the little Captain said, “Stonewall Jackson, seat these men by the roadside, and hide yourself; if they move within five minutes, blow their brains out!” Stonewall said, “All right, sire.” Then the party (six in number) started toward Virginia and disappeared. Now, I want to say to you road agents as follows: My watch was given to me by Judge Sandy Baldwin and Theodore Winters, and I value it above anything else I own. If you will send that to me (to the Enterprise office, or to any prominent man in San Francisco) you may keep the money and welcome. You know you got all the money Mac had—and Mac is an orphan —and besides, the money he had belonged to me. Adieu, my romantic young friends. [24]



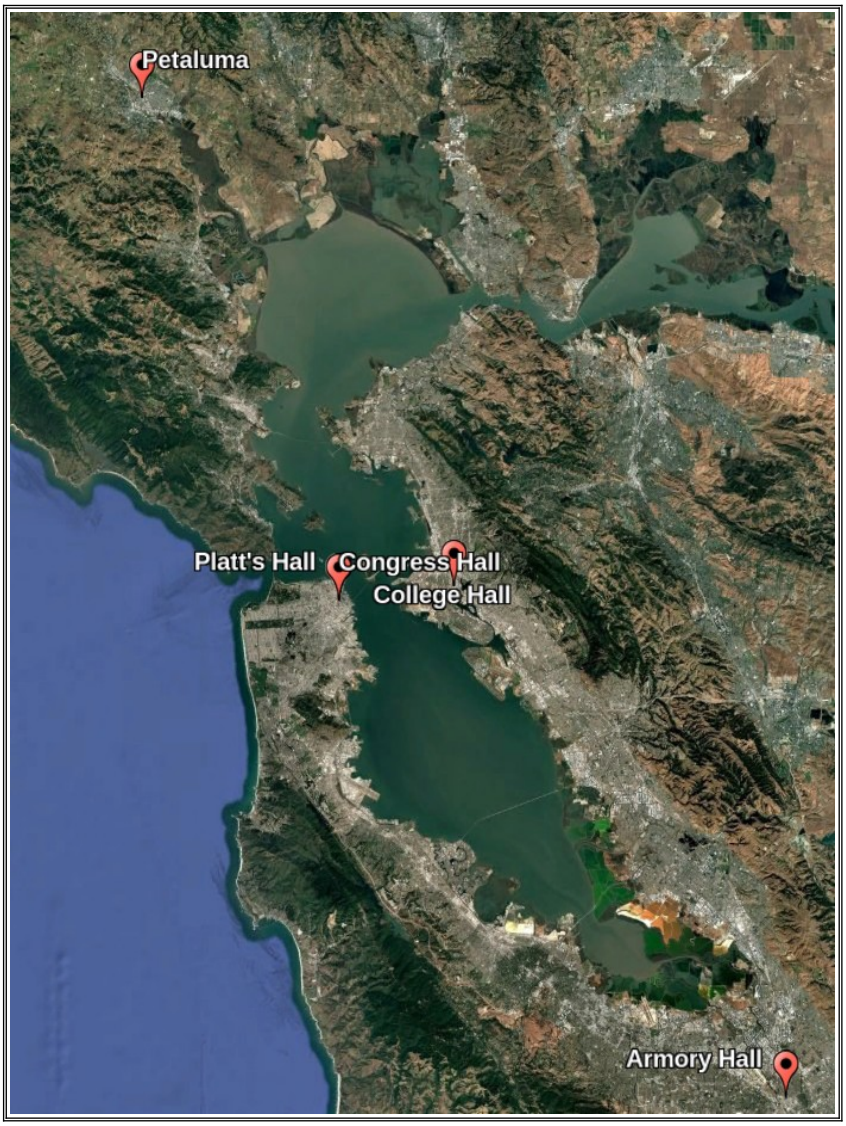
November 12 Monday – At noon, Sam and Denis McCarthy left Virginia City by the Pioneer Stage via Donner Lake route for San Francisco. Just as the stage was leaving from in front of the Wells Fargo office, the chief of police George Birdsall handed Sam a package containing his watch, money, two jackknives, corkscrew, toothpick, three lead pencils, and the masks worn by the “robbers.” According to this account, Sam refused to shake hands with Birdsall and ordered the stage driver to go on.

He was not appeased; he “failed to see where the point of the joke came in,” as Doten put it, and he cursed them until the stage left. Sam left the mining district on a sour note a second time, and the Transcript speculated that he “will have a duel on his hands if he comes into this region again.” McCarthy accompanied him back to San Francisco, but when Sam learned that his agent was complicit in the “joke” he fired him.

Steve Gillis claimed that Sam accused the bunch of other robberies in the area due to the smooth way his prank was pulled off, and swore they’d all wind up in the penitentiary. [25] Lorch claims that Sam was “especially incensed when he discovered that Denis McCarthy was a member of the conspirators,” and “In his fury he sought McCarthy out, paid him off, and told him he wanted no more of his services” . Still, other sources point out that McCarthy and Sam left together. The few letters to McCarthy subsequent do not illuminate this claim.

24 DBD November 11, 1866
25 The Twainian, Jan-Feb 1956 p3

More California Lectures:



November 13 Tuesday – Sam arrived back in San Francisco at night. [26]

Platt's Hall, San Francisco

November 16 Friday – In front of 1,500 people in Platt's Hall, San Francisco, California, Sam gave a new lecture based on the ride west with Orion. Sam repeated the same tired joke about Horace Greeley and Hank Monk on a stagecoach until the house's silence crumbled into waves of laughter. Still, this second San Francisco lecture was not as well received as the first on Oct. 2. Lorch writes:

> He had yet to fully understand that audiences not only expected to be informed but desired to be informed, and that while they were greatly delighted with his humor, they had at least to feel that they had been instructed in order to believe they had received their money's worth. No other problem was to give Mark Twain more concern in the tours that followed

26 MTL 1: 366n4

than precisely this one: how to satisfy his own desire to make his audiences laugh while at the same time satisfying them that they had been instructed. [27]

One source reported that Platt's Hall opened in 1860. Jack Tillmany reports that the first newspaper accounts of events there that he found were in July 1862. The building was on the NE corner of Montgomery and Bush.

It's listed in an 1882 "Guidebook and Street Manual." It was still operating as late as 1885. The Mills Building was later on the site. *San Francisco Theatres*

This building on Mission Street, erected in 1866 and dedicated on 6 January 1867, was described as “an elegant brick structure, in the Anglo-Norman style, the auditorium of which is in the form of an ellipse, with a concave roof, which gives it a peculiar appearance.

Armory Hall, San Jose

November 21 Wednesday – Sam gave the “Sandwich Islands” lecture at Armory Hall, San Jose, California. This is the first lecture where Sam offered to demonstrate cannibalism as practiced in the Sandwich Islands, asking for a mother to bring her child to the platform. This device was successful and yielded much laughter if also a few criticisms now and then from the press for being in bad taste. [28]

The Washoe Evening Slope ran a brief item that declared the proceeds of Sam’s second lecture in San Francisco had been attached for the benefit of one of his creditors. [29]

I have found no information on this location.

Petaluma

Sam gave the “Sandwich Islands” lecture at Petaluma, Calif. That town’s newspaper, the Argus, did not give Sam a flattering review: “…fell below mediocrity”. [30]Lorch attributes the negative reviews of the Argus and the Petaluma Journal to spite for “non-receipt of advertisements and complimentary tickets”. [31]

College Hall, Oakland

The College of California was a private college in Oakland, California. It was the functional predecessor of the public University of California, and the site of its first campus. It was established in 1853, and initially known as the Contra Costa Academy. In 1868, the College agreed to merge with the public Agricultural, Mining, and Mechanical Arts College, which had been created by the state to take advantage of the Morrill Land-Grant Act. However, the private and public colleges ended up contributing assets and objectives to the new public university, which was formed as a new entity and was not an actual merger. *Wikipedia*

November 27 Tuesday – Sam gave the “Sandwich Islands” lecture at Oakland, Calif. in College Hall. Sam stayed with J. Ross Browne and family in Oakland. [32]. The turnout was small for this lecture, only about 200 people, which Lorch attributes to “a misunderstanding about the time at which the talk was to take place, though

27 Lorch p. 44
28 Lorch p 45
29 Lorch p 46
30 Lorch p 47
31 Lorch p 338 attributed to Frear, Mark Twain and Hawaii 447
32 DBD November 27, 1866

the entire city council canceled a meeting and came to the hall as a group." Sam had to wait for the school band to finish a long concert before speaking. [33]

Congress Hall, San Francisco

December 10 Monday – Sam gave the "Sandwich Islands" lecture at Congress Hall in San Francisco as "Mark Twain's Farewell". Lorch say the "lecture was well attended and well received". [34]
The Standard Theatre, 318 Bush St. It opened November 3, 1865 as Congress Hall. The theatre was on the north side of the street between Montgomery and Kearny. Across the street was the Bush St. Theatre, a house that had opened as the Alhambra. *San Francisco Theatres*

A View of the Future:

On the point of departing San Francisco and a return to New York, Twain in his farewell to the west coast offered an image of what he thought the future would bring. It also provides a window on his view of the industrialization occurring in the world around him. From his impromptu farewell address to San Francisco:

> "And while I linger here upon the threshold of this, my new home, to say to you, my kindest and my truest friends, a warm good-bye and an honest peace and prosperity attend you, I accept the warning that mighty changes will have come over this home also when my returning feet shall walk these streets again.
>
> "I read the signs of the times, and I, that am no prophet, behold the things that are in store for you. Over slumbering California is stealing the dawn of a radiant future! The great China Mail Line is established, the Pacific Railroad is creeping across the continent, the commerce of the world is about to be revolutionized. California is Crown Princess of the new dispensation! She stands in the centre of the grand highway of the nations; she stands midway between the Old World and the New, and both shall pay her tribute. From the far East and from Europe, multitudes of stout hearts and willing hands are preparing to flock hither; to throng her hamlets and villages; to till her fruitful soil; to unveil the riches of her countless mines; to build up an empire on these distant shores that shall shame the bravest dreams of her visionaries. From the opulent lands of the Orient, from India, from China, Japan, the Amoor; from tributary regions that stretch from the Arctic circle to the equator, is about to pour in upon her the princely commerce of a teeming population of four hundred and fifty million souls. Half the world stands ready to lay its contributions at her feet! Has any other State so brilliant a future? Has any other city a future like San Francisco?
>
> "This straggling town shall be a vast metropolis; this sparsely populated land shall become a crowded hive of busy men; your waste places shall blossom like the rose, and your deserted hills and valleys shall yield bread and wine for unnumbered thousands; railroads shall be spread hither and thither and carry the invigorating blood of commerce to regions that are languishing now; mills and workshops, yea, and factories shall spring up everywhere, and mines that have neither name nor place to-day shall dazzle the world with

33 Lorch p 47
34 Lorch p 48

their affluence. The time is drawing on apace when the clouds shall pass away from your firmament, and a splendid prosperity shall descend like a glory upon the whole land!

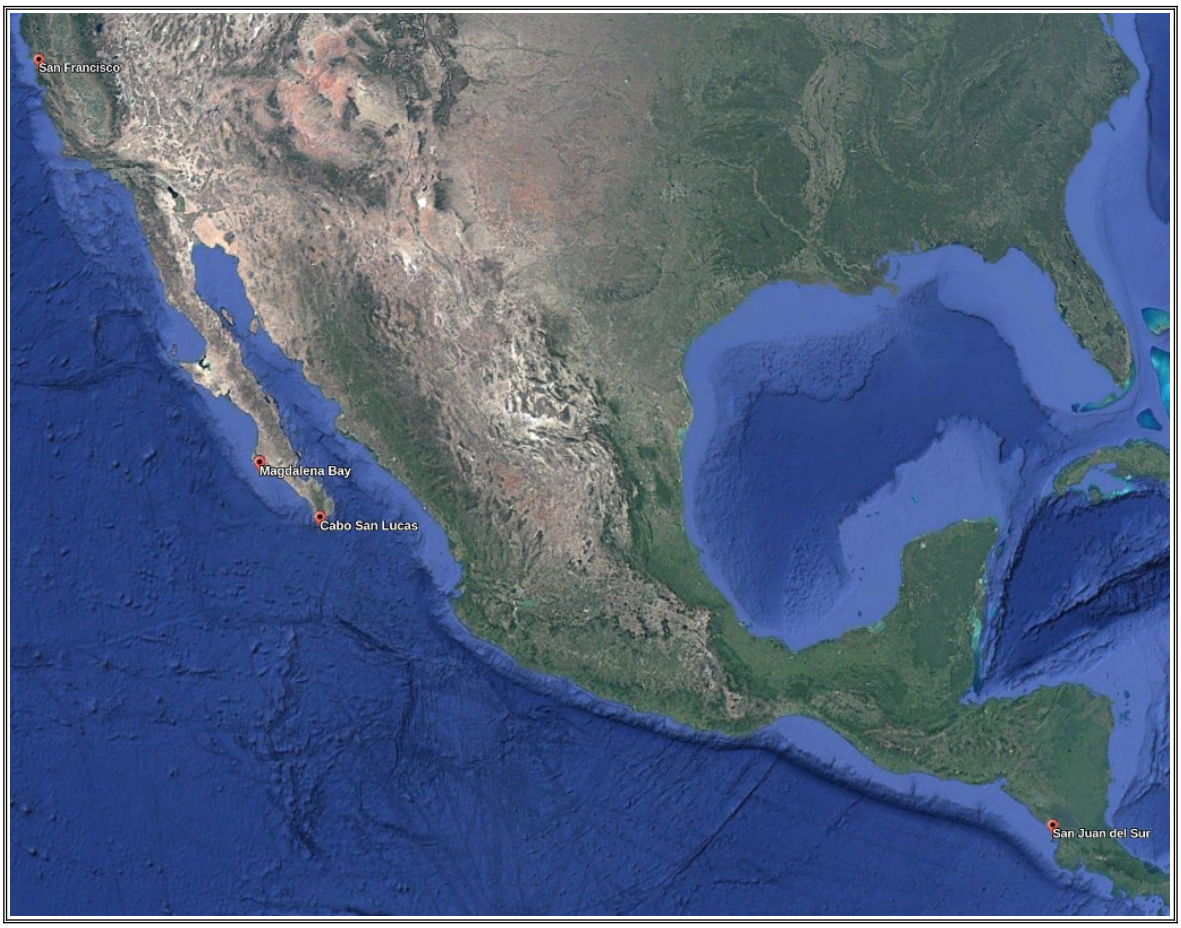
"I am bidding the old city and my old friends a kind, but not a sad farewell, for I know that when I see this home again, the changes that will have been wrought upon it will suggest no sentiment of sadness; its estate will be brighter, happier and prouder a hundred fold than it is this day. This is its destiny, and in all sincerity I can say, So mote it be!" [35]

35 Alta December 15, 1866

Crossing the Peninsula:

> When I returned to San Francisco I projected a pleasure journey to Japan and thence westward around the world; but a desire to see home again changed my mind, and I took a berth in the steamship, bade good-bye to the friendliest land and livest, heartiest community on our continent, and came by the way of the Isthmus to New York—a trip that was not much of a picnic excursion, for the cholera broke out among us on the passage and we buried two or three bodies at sea every day. [36]

Sam's notebook 7 covers dates from December 15, 1866 to Jan. 12, 1867.



San Francisco to San Juan del Sur

Sam sailed from San Francisco for New York, by way of the Isthmus of Nicaragua. The trip took 27 & ½ days and was not an easy one. The first night out the ship nearly sank in a bad storm. Nearly all the passengers were seasick for days. Sam was not seasick but came down again with a mysterious illness that often forced him to bed. Edgar "Ned" Wakeman was the captain of the ship *America*. Wakeman was burly and tattooed and

36 RI p 569

impressed Sam with his strength, his cheery voice, and ability to spin yarns. Sam found Wakeman "inexhaustibly interesting."

From Sam's notebook:

> "Pleasant, sunny day, hills brightly clad with green grass and shrubbery. First night great tempest—the greatest seen on this coast for many years….Passenger said he had served 14 yrs at sea—but considered his time was come now—still, said 'if anybody can save her its old Wakeman'". [37]

The FAIR WEATHER was short-lived. The first evening the ship encountered a "great tempest—the greatest seen on this coast for many years," Sam Clemens noted. 'The night was pitch-black and the third-class passengers in steerage were imprisoned after "the hatches were battened down and canvassed over.' Fortunately, Sam occupied a berth on the upper deck, so the sea 'did not seem so rough to us as it did to those below." The problem, he explained, was that the ship was too heavy at "the head & just doggedly fought the seas, instead of climbing over them. Nearly everybody seasick." Sam escaped *mal de mer* because he "had something worse'—[38]

There is a possibility that the "something worse" Sam suffered on the voyage was actually a case of cholera. Matthew Seybold, September 9, 2021, in a message archived in Twain-L, speculated on this possibility:

> The Surgeon General officially declared a cholera epidemic in San Francisco the same month the *America* departed from the city's port. Then, as now, it is probably reasonable to suspect the outbreak was extensive well before it was officially registered, and San Francisco was one of the last U.S. metropoles to declare the outbreak which spread from coast to coast in 1866, which turned out to be the peak year for cholera in the U.S. during the prolonged midcentury pandemic (which began, if I'm remembering correctly, in Russia).
>
> So, I don't think it is at all unlikely that cholera was introduced from the outset, although it definitely worsened as the voyage progressed, and both ships - the *San Francisco* and the *America* - returned to their origins (NYC & SF) with numerous casualties. There are conflicting totals, through the ships and passengers, who transferred between vessels at Nicaragua. Cholera is, of course, bacterial, and it would've been incredibly difficult to remove it from ships, even after infected. Predictably (and xenophobically), newspaper reports treated cholera as an exotic South American disease even after there were ongoing outbreaks across US, including in NYC and SF. These accounts frequently blame, specifically, a group of soldiers from which many casualties came for the sorry conditions aboard the *America* and *San Francisco*. (up to and including death) before the *America* reached Nicaragua (or took aboard said soldiers).

From Mark Twains Letter (December 20, 1867)

> All the afternoon, yesterday, two or three hundred passengers paced the promenade deck, and so quiet was the sea that not half a dozen of them succumbed to sickness. But at 8 or 9 at night the wind began to rise, and from that time it steadily increased in violence until,

37 MTNJ pp 245-6
38 Scharnhorst p 369

at midnight, it was blowing a hurricane. There was a tremendous sea running, and the night was so pitch dark that a man standing on the deck would find by voices at his elbow that other persons were almost touching him, when he imagined himself alone. On deck, above the lashing of the waves, and the roaring of the winds, the shouting of the captain and his officers, and the hurried tramping of the men were scarcely to be heard.

The steerage passengers were at once imprisoned below, and the hatches battened down and canvassed over; the ship was by the head, and the seas were sweeping over the bows every now and then; every man under the ship's pay - officers, cabin crew and all - were set to work to break cargo and move it aft; a large quantity of flour was transferred to the stern, and the large boats on the after-guard were pumped full of water. These precautions eased the ship's head and saved her. It was well that the hatches were down snug before the terrific squall struck us, just after midnight, else either of the three fearful seas that swept over the ship then in quick succession must have poured thousands of tons of water into her and sent her to the bottom.

As it was, the vessel was in peril enough. She was tossed about like a plaything - climbed lofty billows, paused a moment on the crest, and then plunged down into the gulf on the other side; climbed the next wave, and while one held his breath in anticipation of the ghastly dive and the deadly sinking sensation in the chest that always accompanies it, a prodigious wave would spring upon her from some side angle, and send her stunned and staggering, broadside on, like a man struck with a club! And then the officers floundered in water up to their hips, and shouted orders that came aft reduced to hoarse, confused whispers by the howling blast! Then the gunwale, a solid timber as thick as a man's thigh, snapped like a pipe-stem away went twenty feet of the starboard bulwarks forward - down came a dozen stanchions with a clatter - crash went a deluge of water booming aft through steerage and forward-cabin, carrying stools, carpet sacks, boxes, boots, valises, and a rattling smash-up of queens ware and crockery along with it - and on the reeling floors, amid the shrieking of the cordage and the roaring of the midnight winds and the thundering of the midnight sea down on their knees in the slush went two hundred and fifty of the ungodliest of all the ungodly crowds that ever lumbered a ship yet, to pray!

…

It was a heavy storm - the heaviest Captain Wakeman has seen on this coast in seventeen years, except one - and the heaviest another old sea Captain (among our passengers) of twenty-eight years' experience, ever saw in his life. [N.B.-Is there always an old skipper aboard who never saw such a storm before?] It proved the America to be a staunch and reliable vessel, however, and her commander a thoroughly competent officer, and these things will render the passengers more satisfied and confident hereafter in case we have another storm. [39]

Sam wrote of Wakeman in his December 20th letter to Alta:

39 Alta 18 January

> MIDNIGHT - have been listening to Some of Captain Waxman's stunning forecastle yarns, and I will do him the credit to say he knows how to tell them. With his strong, cheery voice, animated countenance, quaint phraseology, defiance of grammar and extraordinary vim in the matter of gesture and emphasis, he makes a most effective story out of very unpromising materials. There is a contagion about his whole-souled jollity that the chief mourner at a funeral could not resist. He is fifty years old, and as rough as a bear in voice and action, and yet as kind-hearted and tender as a woman. He is a burly, hairy, sun burned, stormy-voiced old salt, who mixes strange oaths with incomprehensible sailor phraseology and the gentlest and most touching pathos, and is tattooed from head to foot like a Fejee Islander. His tongue is forever going when he has got no business on his hands, and though he knows nothing of policy or the ways of the world, he can cheer up any company of passengers that ever travelled in a ship, and keep them cheered up. He never drinks a drop, never gambles, and never swears where a lady or a child may chance to hear him - but with all things consonant with the occasion he sometimes soars into flights of fancy swearing that fill the listener with admiration. [40]

Sam wrote to Wakeman's daughter in 1877:

> I can mention some stories, but the happy details have all faded away. * * * His best stories were so dramatic in manner, that they can only be talked, they cannot be written; they talk with fine effect, but they lose a vast amount of their force as soon as they are on paper, for there was a charm about his telling of them which pen and ink cannot convey. * * * He made you cry and laugh at the same time. It is easy to make people laugh; it is very hard to make them do both.[41]

From Mark Twain's Journal:

> "This is a long, long night. I occupy the lower berth & read & smoke by a ship's lantern borrowed from the steward (I won the middle berth, but gave it to Smith because he is seasick & we have piled our apples, limes, wines, books & small traps in the upper one)". [42]

December 20 Thursday – From Sam's notebook:

> At noon, 5 days out from San Francisco, abreast high stretch of land at foot of Magdalena Bay, Capt came & said, "Come out here (we had just got into warm weather & covered the whole after part of the vessel with awnings, making it extremely cool & shady for December)—"I want to show you something' —took the marine glass,—
>
> Scene—Two whale ships at anchor under the bluffs—one listed & hoisting vast mass of blubber aboard.
>
> Said "Now to-night they'll try it out on deck & it'll look like the whole ship's on fire. The first time I ever see it was in '50—I come along here just after dark, see a ship on fire

40 Alta 27 January
41 MTP (UCCL 01493).
42 MTNJ p 246

apparently—I didn't know the country—didn't dare to go in there with the ship, so I sent a boat's crew & said "Pull for your lives d—n you—& tell the Capt I'll lay here if it's a week & render him all the assistance I can & then carry his people to Sanf."

Well, we laid to & waited & waited—all the passengers on deck & anxious for the boat to come back & report—but 10 ock, no boat —11 ock—no boat—passengers begin to get tired & sidle off to bed —12 oclk—no boat—every passenger give up & went below except one old woman & by G-d, she stuck it out & never took her eyes off the fire.

By & bye at 12.30 back the boat come & me & the old woman crowded to the lee rail to see & hear it all,—couldn't see no extra men.

The officer of the boat stepped on deck & lifted his hat & says—"The capt of the ship sends great gratification—great obligations & thanks for your trouble & your good intentions but he ain't in trouble but quite the reverse—is full of oil & ready to up anchor to-morrow & is giving his crew a big blow out on deck & is illuminating—sends his good wishes & success & hopes you'll accept this boat-load of A 1 <sea-turtles> sea-turkles."

The old woman leaned over the rail & shaded her eyes from the lanterns with her hand & she see them varmints flopping their flippers about in the boat & she says:

"For the land's sake—I've sot here & sot here & sot here all this blessed night cal'lating to see a hull boat-load of sorrowful roasted corpses, & now it ain't nothing after all but a lot of nasty turkles—it's too dern bad!"

Sent compliments with the Capt. to the whale ships.[43]

December 21 Friday – From Sam's notebook:

"Crossed tropic of Capricorn—Cape St Lucas—now abreast Gulf of California….Geniuses are people who dash off weird, wild, incomprehensible poems with astonishing facility, & then go & get booming drunk & sleep in the gutter…people who have genius do not pay their board, as a general thing". [44]

December 22 Saturday – From Sam's notebook:

"Passengers have been singing several days—now the men have come down to leap-frog, boyish gymnastics & tricks of equilibrium—& sitting on a bottle with legs extended & X d , & threading a good sized needle". [45]

December 23 Sunday – From Sam's notebook:

43 MTNJ pp249-50
44 MTNJ p 250
45 MTNJ 251-2

Morning service on Prom deck by Fackler—organ & choir. I had rather travel with that old portly, hearty, jolly, boisterous, good-natured old sailor, Capt. Ned Wakeman than with any other man I ever came across. He never drinks, & never plays cards; he never swears, except in the privacy of his own quarters, with a friend or so, & then his feats of fancy blasphemy are calculated to fill the hearer with awe & the liveliest admiration. [46]

Christmas Eve—9 P.M. Me & the Capt & Kingman out forward. Capt. Said—Don't like the looks of that point with the mist outside of it—hold her a point free. Quartermaster (touching his hat)—"The child is dead sir (been sick 2 days.—) What are yr orders". [47]

The death of a child onboard made for a solemn Christmas Eve.

[December 25 Tuesday – Christmas]:

CHRISTMAS NIGHT.—The child died last evening, and some of the lady passengers sat up with the corpse all night. At ten this morning, we all assembled on the lower guard aft, and listened with uncovered heads, to a brief sermon by the clergyman (Rev. Mr. Fackler) and the reading of the Episcopal burial service—the capstan with a national flag over it served for a pulpit, and meanwhile the first officer and boatswain held the canvassed corpse with its head resting on their shoulders and its feet upon the taffrail—at the conclusion there was a breathless pause; then the minister said "Earth unto earth—ashes unto ashes—dust unto dust!"—a sharp plunge of the weighted body into the sea, a shudder from the startled passengers, a wild shriek from the young mother (a mere girl), and all was over. Within three hours, with that solemn presence gone out of the ship, cheerfulness and vivacity reigned again.[48]

[December 29 Saturday] –

SAN JUAN AND CHOLERA

DECEMBER 29. — One sea voyage is ended anyhow. We have arrived at San Juan del Sur, and must leave the ship and cross the Isthmus—not to-day, though. They have posted a notice on the ship that the cholera is raging among a battalion of troops just arrived from New York, and so we are not permitted to go ashore to-day. And to the sea-weary eyes of some of our people, no doubt, bright green hills never looked so welcome, so enchanting, so altogether lovely, as these do that lie here within pistol-shot of us. But the law is spoken, and so half the ship's family are looking longingly ashore, or discussing the cholera news fearfully, and the other half are in the after cabin, singing boisterously and carrying on like a troop of wild school children. [49]

December 30 Sunday – The *America* completed the first leg of the trip, reaching San Juan del Sur. Here there was a delay occasioned by a report of cholera on the Isthmus, an ominous forecast of the dangers that lay ahead. The disease had broken out among a varity of six hundred passengers from New York, half of

46 MTNJ p 253
47 MTNJ p 256
48 Alta March 15, 1868
49 Alta March 15, 1868

them soldiers, who had been stranded at San Juan del Sur for two weeks awaiting the America, They had arrived there too late to make their scheduled connection for California partly because their ship from New York, the North American Steamship Company's San Francisco, became disabled near Virginia and had to put into port to transfer them to another vessel. Clemens recorded their distress in his notebook and was no doubt apprehensive that the *San Francisco*, with so recent a record of poor performance was to convey the *America*'s four hundred passengers to New York. [50]

Cholera had claimed 35 passengers there awaiting transportation to San Francisco, so the passengers of *America* were not allowed ashore until later in the morning.

From Sam's Mar. 15 Alta letter:

> GREYTOWN, January 1 st .—While we lay all night at San Juan, the baggage was sent ashore in lighters, and next morning we departed ourselves. We found San Juan to consist of a few tumble-down frame shanties—they call them hotels—nestling among green verdure and overshadowed by picturesque little hills. The spot where we landed was crowded with horses, mules, ambulances and half-clad yellow natives, with bowie-knives two feet long, and as broad as your hand, strapped to their waists. I thought these

> barefooted scoundrels were soldiers, but no, they were merely citizens in civil life. Here and there on the beach moved a soiled and ragged white woman, to whom the sight of our ship must have been as a vision of Paradise; for here a vast ship-load of passengers had been kept in exile for fifteen days through the wretched incompetency of one man—the Company's agent on the Isthmus. He had sent a steamer empty to San Francisco, when

50 MTNJ p 239

he knew well that this multitude of people were due at Greytown. They will finish their journey, now, in our ship.[51]

San Juan del Sur to San Juan del Norte

From Sam's letter to the Alta (March15):

Our party of eight - we had made it up the night before - being the first boat-load to leave the ship, was entitled to the first choice of the ambulances, or the equestrian accommodations that were to convey us the twelve miles we must go by land between San Juan and Virgin Bay, on Lake Nicaragua. Some of the saddle-horses and mules - many of them, in fact - looked very well; but if there was any choice between the ambulances, or especially between the miraculous scarecrows that were to haul them, it was hardly perceptible. You never saw such harness in your life, nor such mules, nor such drivers. They were funny individually and funny in combination. Except the ghastly sores on the animals' backs, where the crazy harness had chafed, and scraped, and scarified - that part of it would move anybody's pity for the poor things.

We climbed into one of the largest of the faded red ambulances (mud wagons we call them in the mountains), with four little sore-backed rabbits hitched to it, and cleared for Virgin Bay. The driver commenced by beating and banging his team and cursing them like a furious maniac, in bad Spanish, and he kept it up all through that twelve-mile journey of three hours and a half, over a hard, level, beautiful road. We envied the people who were not crippled and could ride horseback.

But we clattered along pretty lively, and were a jolly party. The first thing the ladies noticed as we lost sight of the sea, and wound in among an overshadowing growth of dewy vines and forest trees, was a "dear, dear little baby - oh, see the darling!" - a vile, distempered, mud-colored native brat, making dirt-pies in front of an isolated cabin; and the first thing the men noticed was - was - but they could not make it out; a guide board perhaps, or a cross, or the modest grave-stone of some ill fated stranger. But it was none of these. When we drew nearer it turned out to be a sign nailed to a tree, and it said "Try Ward's shirts!" There was some round abuse indulged in, then, of Ward and plantation bitters men, and all such people, who invade all sacred places with their rascally signs, and mar every landscape one might gaze upon in worship, and turn to a farce every sentimental thought that enters his brain. I know that if I were to go to old Niagara, and stand with his mists blowing in my face and his voice thundering in my ear, I would swell with a noble inspiration and say, "Oh, grand, sublime, magnificent - " and then behold on his front, "S. T. 1860 X Plantation Bitters," and be incensed. It is a shame.

THE PROCESSION UNDER WAY

51 Alta March 15, 1867

The bright, fresh green on every hand, the delicious softness and coolness of the air (it had just showered a little before we started), the interest of unknown birds and flowers and trees, the delightful new sensation of the bumping and rattling of the ambulance - everything so cheery and lively, as compared with our old dull monotony and shoreless sea on board the ship - wrought our party up to a pitch of joyous animation and enthusiasm that I would have thought impossible with such dry old sticks. I ask pardon of the ladies - and even of the gentle men, also. All hands voted "the Nicaragua route forever!" [N.B. - They used to do that every day or two - and then every other day or two they would damn the Nicaragua route forever. Such are the ways of passengers, all the world over.]

About every two hundred yards we came across a little summer-house of a peanut stand at the roadside, with raven haired, splendid-eyed Nicaragua damsels standing in attitudes of careless grace behind them - damsels buff-colored, like an envelope - damsels who were always dressed the same way: in a single flowing gown of fancifully figured calico, "gathered" across the breast (they are singularly full in the bust, the young ones), and ruffled all round, near the bottom of the skirt. They have white teeth, and pleasant, smiling, winning faces. They are virtuous according to their lights, but I guess their lights are a little dim. Two of these picturesque native girls were exceedingly beautiful - such liquid, languishing eyes! such pouting lips! such glossy, luxuriant hair! such ravishing, incendiary expression! such grace! such voluptuous forms, and such precious little drapery about them! such - tooth" -

"But you just prospect one of them heifers with a fine-tooth" -

This attempted interruption was from Brown, and procured his banishment at once. This man will not consent to see what is attractive, alone, but always unearths the disagreeable features of everything that comes under his notice.

These groups of dark maidens keep for sale a few cups of coffee, tea or chocolate, some bananas, oranges, pineapples, hard boiled eggs, a dozen bottles of their vile native liquors, some ornamental cups carved from gourds of the calabash tree, a monkey or two - and their prices were so moderate that, in spite of all orders and remonstrances to the contrary, the steerage passengers have been overloading their stomachs with all sorts of beverages and edibles, and will pay for it in Asiatic cholera before they are many days older, no doubt.[52]

Our road was smooth, level, and free from mud and dust, and the scenery in its neighborhood was pleasing, though not particularly striking. Many of the trees were starred all over with pretty blossoms. There was no lack of vegetation, and occasionally the balmy air came to us laden with a delicious fragrance. We passed two or three high hills, whose bold fronts, free from trees or shrubs, were thickly carpeted with softest, greenest grass - a picture our eyes could never tire of. Sometimes birds of handsome plumage flitted by, and

52 Note Twain’s ignorance of the nature of cholera. He makes the same mistake on board the *San Francisco* with his January 2nd entry

we heard the blythe songs of others as we rode through the forests. But the monkeys claimed all attention. All hands wanted to see a real, live, wild monkey skirmishing among his native haunts. Our interest finally moderated somewhat in the native women; the birds; the calabash trees, with their gourd-like fruit; the huge, queer knots on trees, that were said to be ants' nests; the lime trees; and even in a singular species of cactus, long, slender and green, that climbed to the very tops of great trees, and completely hid their trunks and branches, and choked them to death in its winding folds - so like an ugly, endless serpent; but never did the party cease to consider the wild monkey a charming novelty and a joy forever.

MASQUERADING ON THE ROAD

Our four hundred passengers on horseback, muleback, and in four-mule ambulances, formed the wildest, raggedest and most uncouth procession I ever saw. It reminded me of the fantastic masquerading pageants they used to get up on the Fourth of July in the Western States, or on Mardigras Day in New Orleans. The steerage passengers travelled on muleback, chiefly, with coats, oil-skin carpet sacks, and blankets dangling around their saddles. Some of the saddles were new and good, but others were in all possible stages of mutilation and decay. There were not a dozen good riders in the two hundred and fifty that went on horseback, but every man seemed to consider that inasmuch as the animals belonged to "the Company," it was a stern duty to ride them to death, if possible, and they tried hard to do it. Such racing and yelling, and beating and banging and spurring, and such bouncing of blanket bundles, and flapping and fluttering of coat-tails, and such frantic scampering of the multitude of mules, and bobbing up and down of the long column of men, and rearing and charging of struggling ambulances in their midst, I never saw before, and I never enjoyed anything so much.

I never saw Brown's equanimity so disturbed as it was that day, either. The philosopher had received a charge at San Francisco - a widow, with three children and a servant girl. Every day on the trip, he had been obliged to go down among the sweltering stenches of the ship's hold, to pull and haul Mrs. B.'s trunks out from among piles of other baggage, and rummage among them for a shirt for Johnny, or a bib for Tommy, or a shawl for the mother or the maid, or a diaper for the baby, but these vexations were nothing to his Isthmus transportation troubles. He had to take his party horseback, and in order to keep them together amid the confusion of the procession, he tied his five mules together, end to end, and marched in single file - the forward horse's tail made fast to the next one's nose, and so on. He rode the leading horse himself, with the baby in his arms; Mrs. B. and the two boys came next, and the servant girl brought up the rear. It was a solemnly comical spectacle. Everything went well, though, till the racing began, and then the philosopher's mule got his ambition up and led the party a merry dance. Brown tried to hold him back with one hand for a while, and then triced the baby up under his left arm, and pulled back with both hands. This had a good deal of effect, but still the little detachment darted through the main procession like the wind, making a sensation wherever it went, and was greeted with many a whack and many a laugh. Occasionally Brown's mule stopped and fell

to bucking, and then his other animals closed up and got tangled together in a helpless snarl. Of course, Brown had to unlimber the baby and straighten things out again. He swore hard, but under his breath, and sweated as no man ever sweated before. The entire procession had arrived at Virgin Bay and were stowed on the boat before he got there. But his beasts had grown tranquil enough by that time. Their heads were all down, and it was hard to tell which looked the most jaded and melancholy - themselves or their riders. It was like intruding a funeral cortege upon the boisterous hilarity of the balance of the ship's family.

ALL QUIET AGAIN

Comfortably quartered on the little steamer, we sat in the shade and lunched, smoked, compared notes of our jolly little scamper across the Isthmus, bought handsome mahogany walking-canes from the natives, and finally relapsed into pensive and placid gazing out upon the rippling waters of Lake Nicaragua and the two majestic mountains that tower up out of its blue depths and wrap their green summits in the fleecy clouds. [53]

Sam writes in his letter to the Alta:

Out of the midst of the beautiful Lake Nicaragua spring two magnificent pyramids, clad in the softest and richest green, all flecked with shadow and sunshine, whose summits pierce the billowy clouds. They look so isolated from the world and its turmoil - so tranquil, so dreamy, so steeped in slumber and eternal repose. What a home one might make among their shady forests, their sunny slopes, their breezy dells, after he had grown weary of the toil, anxiety and unrest of the bustling, driving world. These mountains seem to have no level ground at the bases but rise abruptly from the water. There is nothing rugged about them - they are shapely and symmetrical, and all their outlines are soft, rounded and regular. One is 4,200 and the other 5,400 feet high, though the highest being the furthest removed makes them look like twins. A stranger would take them to be of equal altitude. Some say they are 6,000 feet high, and certainly they look it. When not a cloud is visible elsewhere in the heavens, their tall summits are magnificently draped with them. They are extinct volcanoes, and consequently their soil (decomposed lava) is wonderfully fertile. They are well stocked with cattle ranches, and with corn, coffee and tobacco farms. The climate is delightful, and is the healthiest on the Isthmus.

…

Our boat started across the lake at 2 P.M., and at 4 A.M. the following morning we reached Fort San Carlos, where the San Juan River flows out – a hundred miles in twelve hours - not particularly speedy, but very comfortable. [54]

Sam and passengers crossed the lake and arrived at San Carlos, Nicaragua. From Sam’s notebook:

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“Native thatched houses—coffee, eggs, bread, cigars & fruit for sale—delicious—10 cents buy pretty much anything & in great quantity. Californians can’t understand how 10 or 25 cents can buy a sumptuous lunch of coffee, eggs & bread….Saw at San Carlos the first osage trees of the trip—my favorite tree above all others”. [55]

Here they changed us to a long, double-decked shell of a stern-wheel boat, without a berth or a bulkhead in her - wide open, nothing to obstruct your view except the slender stanchions that supported the roof. And so we started down the broad and beautiful river in the gray dawn of the balmy summer morning.

At eight we breakfasted. On this boat they gave us tea, coffee, and sandwiches composed of one piece of ham between two pieces of bread. There is nothing like variety. In a little while all parties were absorbed in noting the scenery on shore - trees like cypress; other trees with large red blossoms; great feathery tree ferns and giant cactuses; clumps of tall bamboo; all manner of trees and bushes, in fact, webbed together with vines; occasionally a vista that opened, stretched its carpet of fresh green grass far within the jungle, then slowly closed again.

THE GRAVE OF THE LOST STEAMER

In this land of rank vegetation, no spot of soil can be cleared off and kept barren a week. Nature seizes upon every vagrant atom of dust and forces it to relieve her over-burdened store-houses. Weeds spring up in the cracks of floors, and clothe the roofs of huts in green; if a handful of dust settles in the crotch of a tree, ferns spring there and wave their graceful plumes in the tropic breeze. Filibustering Walker sunk a steamboat in the river; the sands washed down, filled in around her, built up a little oval island. The wind brought seeds thither, and they clothed every inch of it in luxuriant grass. Then trees grew and vines climbed up and hung them with bright garlands, and the steamer's grave was finished. The wreck was invisible to us, save that the two great fore-and-aft braces still stood up out of the grass and fenced in the trees. It was a pretty picture.

ANCIENT CASTILLO

About noon, we swept gaily around a bend in the beautiful river, and a stately old adobe castle came into view - a relic of the olden time of the old buccaneering days of Morgan and his merry men. It stands upon a grassy dome-like hill, and the forests loom up beyond. They say that Lord Nelson once captured it and that this was his first notable feat. It cost him several hours, with 250 men, and good, hard, bloody fighting, to get it. In our time, Walker took it with 25 men, without firing a shot - through the treachery of the Commandante, they say.

There is a little straggling village under the hill, a village composed of a single rank of houses, extending some three hundred yards down the shore. There is a dangerous rapid here. It is said to be artificial - formed by man in former times to keep the pirate boats from

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penetrating the interior. We had to get ashore here, walk around the rapids, and get on another stern wheeler. Every house we passed was a booth for the sale of fruits and provisions. The bananas, pine-apples, cocoa-nuts and coffee were good, and the cigars very passable, but the oranges, although fresh, of course, were of a very inferior quality. Cheapness is the order of the day. You can buy as much of any one article as you can possibly want for a dime, and a sumptuous dinner for two or three for half a dollar. Bring along your short bits when you come this way. It is the grand base and foundation of all values, and is better received, and with less suspicion, than any other coin. [56]

At Castillo they changed to another stern-wheel steamer, the *Cora.* Continuing along the San Juan River:

Vine festoons terrace & conceal hills like a web—couldn't believe they were hills at all except that upper trees tower too high to be on the bank level.

Dark grottos, fairy harbors—tunnels, temples, columns, pillars,towers, pilasters, terraces, pyramids, mounds, domes, walls, in endless confusion of vine-work—no shape known to architecture unimitated—& all so webbed together with vines that short distances within only gained by glimpses.—monkeys here & there—birds warbling—gorgeous plumaged birds on the wing—Paradise itself—the imperial realm of beauty—nothing to wish for to make it perfect.

The changing vistas of the river—corners & points folding backward—retreating & unveiling new wonders beyond—of towering walls of verdure—gleaming cataracts of vines pouring sheer down from 150 feet & mingling with the grass—wonderfull waterfalls of glittering leaves as deftly overlapping each other as the scales of a fish—a vast green wall —solid a moment,—then as we advance, changing & opening into gothic windows, collonades—all manner of quaint & charming shapes (D—n the blackguard with the damaged plug hat on who is looking over my shoulder as I make these notes on the boiler deck)[57]

(Man overboard!— (rush!)
Alligators! (rush)—from side to side of boat.[58]

Saw island 200 feet long grown over with thickest grass—locomotive boiler & steam drum sitting straight up,—the pyramidal walking beam timbers standing up behind them & completely swathed in green garlands & festoons of vines & shaded by low bright green trees. [59]

The country through w[hich] this San Juan River passes was made to look at & travel through—but not to live in

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57 MTNJ p 261
58 MTNJ p 262
59 MTNJ p 263

Hills 6 or 800 feet high, 40 or 50 miles below Castillo Rapids —steep & built of a dense architecture of delicate green domes of trees & each dome splendid with sunshine on top & so enchantingly shaded off with indian summery films to absolute darkness & blackness —dome upon dome they rise from the level of the river timber high into the sunny cloudless atmosphere—beautiful beyond all description—exstasy.

Tents & canopies of vines.

Tall straight clean white shaft of the Peruvian cedar all along (Cigar box wood).

Stately mahogany tree

Tall slender bastard or wild banana tree with neither limb nor — leaf except at extreme top a graceful plume of long feathery leaves somewhat like cocoa-nut. [60]

Many great lazy alligators lying on bank sleeping in the sun—bright plumaged parrots flying above the trees—birds with gay plumage & great hooked villainous bills—such as we see in the menagerie—long legged, long-necked birds that rise awkwardly from the edge of the jungle, crook their necks like an S, shove their long bills forward & thrust their long legs out behind like a steering oar when they flying—& monkeys capering among the trees —these are the signs of the tropics.

At first everybody apologised for coming this way—& said it must be done merely to see the country & get it off their minds—a sort of compulsory sense of duty—never should come this way again of course—but now, on the San Juan River with all this enchantment around us, & after going over what we have passed thro' & decided that it has been nothing but a comfortable, cheerful satisfactory pleasure trip, we all begin to confess that if we were already thro' our business in the States & ready to return, we should be uncommonly apt to come this way, after all. [61]

Slept on the *Cora* on floor & hammocks at woodyard first night out from Castillo. Started at 2 AM & got to Greytown at daylight. [62]

After a night "tied up at the bank within 30 miles of Greytown", the *Cora* arrived at the coast on 31 December. Clemens spent the night ashore in Greytown and began the new year "in the midst of a heavy sea and a drenching rain," as the passengers bound for New York were shuttled by small boat to the San Francisco.

We got to Greytown early on the last day of the year, and saw the steamer at anchor that was to take us to New York. The town does not amount to much. There is a good deal of land around there, and it is curious that they didn't build it larger - but somehow they didn't. It is composed of two hundred old frame houses and some nice vacant lots, and its

60 MTNJ p 264
61 MTNJ p 265
62 MTNJ p 267

comeliness is greatly enhanced, I may say is rendered gorgeous, by the cluster of stern-wheel steamboats at the water front.

The population is 800, and is mixed - made up of natives, Americans, Spaniards, Germans, English and Jamaica negroes. Of course the spoken language is Spanish. Some of the negro babies do not wear any clothes at all, and the cows march through the public thoroughfares with a freedom which pen cannot describe. The inhabitants are not vain, and do not care for luxury and furniture. Most of them keep for sale small cigars called "poco tiempos" - ten cents a grab - and native brandy, tropical fruits and sea-grass hammocks. They sell everything cheap - even excellent foreign wines and such things, for import duties are light. The transit business has made every other house a lodging camp, and you can get a good bed anywhere for a dollar. It does not cost much to keep a Greytown bed in order; there is nothing to it but a mattress, two sheets and a mosquito bar. The town is ornamented with cocoa-nut trees, the outskirts are bordered with chaparral, and everywhere the pink bachelor button blossoms of the sensitive plant smile among the grass. [Smile among the grass is good.- M. T.]

The *Santiago de Cuba* brought the cholera to the Isthmus last trip, and thirty-five people died of it. A young man, a resident of Greytown, also died of it, which exasperated his mother very much. So the citizens got up a Board of Health, and prohibited the cholera from coming ashore there any more. While we were up town the stern-wheeler containing our steerage and second cabin passengers arrived, and was at once warned to anchor in the stream and let no one come ashore! Not until we had been there twenty-four hours, and were ready to take final leave, did those crowded and cursing passengers discover what bred the tabu. It then came out that while Brown was drinking some native brandy in one of the saloons, he remarked that he had tasted milder stuff; but then, he said, he had escaped cholera on the Isthmus and smallpox among the steerage folks, and he guessed he could survive that drink. A citizen at once reported the remark to the Board of Health, and hence the order - and never a steerage passenger got a chance to go ashore at Greytown. There was some talk in the steerage of hanging Brown, but it never came to anything. [63]

Greytown to New York

Amid a downpour on January 1, 1867, Sam and the other passengers finally embarked for New York on the steamer *San Francisco*. The ship had suffered repeated mechanical problems en route to Nicaragua and, unbeknownst to Sam and his peers, was infected with cholera. Rather than quarantine the arriving passengers from the *San Francisco* for thirty days and await medical clearance to put the ship back into service, the company officials marched the passengers from the *America* to a death ship for their ten-day voyage to New York. [64]

ALL this morning the surf-boats were busy bringing New York passengers ashore from the steamer *San Francisco*, and carrying us out to take their places - and all in the midst of a

63 Alta March 16, 1867
64 Scharnhorst p 371

heavy sea and a drenching rain. We took our places in the surf-boat at 8 A.M. and with the first stroke of the oars we were soaked to the skin. Yet it was very pleasant. It was quite a picture to get a misty and momentary glimpse of the boat ahead of us through the driving rain, as it rose high upon the crest of a lofty wave, and then sank down, leaving nothing visible in all the wide horizon but the rainy sea.

It was dreary enough on the ship when we got there, squatting around on the wet promenade deck watching baggage and looking soaked, woe-begone and disconsolate. We were well satisfied, though, for the boat loads that were leaving the vessel every moment were bound for vastly drearier quarters. We sailed at noon.[65]

January 2 Wednesday – Sam reported in his notebook that there were two cases of cholera on board. By the next morning two men were dead from cholera.

The first three cases of cholera in steerage were reported on January 2. The first of these patients died and was buried at sea by the end of the day, Reverend Fackler again officiating. A second victim died the next day and the corpse immediately cast overboard lest the disease spread. By January 5 three people had died and a fourth passenger was fatally ill; he soon died and “was shoved overboard half an hour afterward sowed up in a blanket with 60 pounds of iron.” The “cursed fools” in steerage were reticent to report their illness, fearing they would be charged all the money they possessed for medical help, so they let the diarrhea run two or three days & then, getting scared they run to the surgeon & hope to be cured, And they lie like blazes—swear they have just been taken when the doctor of course knows better. He asked a patient the

65 Alta 17 March

other day if he had any money to get some brandy with—said no—the ship had to furnish it —when the man died they found a $20 piece in his pocket.[66]

Two cases of cholera reported in the steerage to-day.

This ominous note is the first of contradictory reports at the onset of a ship-board epidemic which resulted in seven deaths before the vessel arrived in New York on 12 January 1867.[67]

The Larboard Watch ahoy.

We are running along in sight of the Mosquito Coast—saw a village a while ago.

Kingman's report of small-pox kept the steerage from getting ashore at Greytown, & now I don't more than half believe his report that there are 2 cases yellow fever below decks,

Got Capt's permission to have a safety lantern in my room.

4 PM Jan 2. The surgeon of the ship has just reported to the Captain in my hearing, that two of the cases are "mighty bad," & the 3rd "awful bad." At this point, Sam is unaware of just how serious his situation is and writes in his journal *This is neither cholera nor yellow fever I suspect—these men have been eating green tropical fruit & washing it down with villainous aguardiente*.[68]

Brown came & woke me up at midnight to get this off, & it had peculiar pungency from the fact that the ship had been lying motionless on the dead calm water for <*two hours*> an hour fixing a bolt-head that broke this evening.

One of the sick men is dead. This calls for Rev. Fackler again. —9.10 P.M. poor fellow.

The man was buried overboard at a little past 10 PM. [69]

2d Jan. Midnight. Another patient at the point of death—they are filling him up with brandy,

2 Bells—The man is dead.

4 Bells—He is cast overboard. Expedition is the word in these crowded steerages, [70]

Second Cabin who have bought into the first are shoving themselves here there & everywhere so afraid everybody won't know it.

66 Scharnhorst p 371-2
67 Comment from editors of MTNJ p 269
68 MTNJ p 269
69 MTNJ p 271
70 MTNJ p 272

They have taken complete possession of the only upper Saloon on the ship—the Smoking Saloon aft—to the exclusion not only of the gentlemen but to all first cabin passengers. These things are not pleasant, but under the circumstances they cannot be helped.[71]

January 3 Thursday – From Sam's notebook: "9:30 PM. We are to be off the coast of Cuba to-morrow they say—I cannot believe it" [72]

Jan. 3.—Passed close to the Swan Islands at 9 AM—small, low, green-clad—they are guano islands—2 ships lying there taking guano.

January 4 Friday – Three days into the voyage the ship had engine problems. An engine piece broke and took two hours to repair.

Capt.—who came aboard at Greytown where in 3 years he had worn out his constitution & destroyed his health lingered until 10 this morning & then died & was shoved overboard half an hour afterward sowed up in a blanket with 60 pounds of iron. He leaves a wife at Rochester, N.Y. This makes the fourth death on shipboard since we left San Francisco.

Jan 4—3 PM—close in on N.W. corner of Cuba—long, flat, verdure-clad shore—Cape with a light house on it.

January 5 Saturday – The engine broke again and four hours were lost.

"We are to put in at Key West, Florida, to-day for coal for ballast—so they say—but rather for medicines, perhaps—the physic locker is about pumped dry"

There are half a dozen on the sick list to-day.

The d—d fools deserve to suffer some.

The disease has got into the second cabin at last—& one case in first cabin. The consternation is so great that several are going to get off at Key West (if quarantine regulations permit it) & go North overland.

10 AM—The Episcopal clergyman, Rev. Mr. Fackler, is taken—bad diarrhea and griping.

All hands looking anxiously forward to the cool weather we shall strike 24 hours hence to drive away the sickness.

12—"Shape" dead—5th death.— "Shape" barber—only sick about 12 hours—usually eat rations for 4.

Rev. Fackler has made himself sick with sorrow for the poor fellows that died.

71 MTNJ p 272
72 MTNJ p 273

12.30 PM—The minister has got a fit—convulsion of some kind—so they are burying poor "Shape" without benefit of clergy. They don't wait many minutes after breath is out of the body.

There is no use in disguising it—I really believe the ship is out of medicines—we have a good surgeon but nothing to work with.

Just heard the Capt say "Purser put up an immense sign that all can read: "No Charge for Medical Attendance Whatever!' —put it so all can read it."

I told the Capt this morning that the fear of doctors' bills was one chief reason why the steerage passengers were concealing their illness till the last moment.

The Captain visits every corner of the ship daily to see that it is kept in a state of perfect cleanliness.

Sam began to make a list of the dead on board and got to number eight.

Thinking of the most recent victims—"both so well when I saw them yesterday evening, I almost realize that I myself may be dead to-morrow.

2 PM—As the boys come to my room one after another (I am abed) I observe a marked change in their demeanor during the last ½ hour—they report that the Minister, only sick an hour or maybe two, is already very low—that a hospital has been fitted up in the steerage & he been removed thither.

Verily, the ship is fast becoming a floating hospital herself—not an hour passes but brings its fresh sensation, its new disaster—its melancholy tidings.

Since the last 2 hours all laughter, all levity has ceased in the ship—a settled gloom is upon the faces of the passengers.

4 PM—The unfortunate minister is dying—he has bidden us all good-bye & now lies barely breathing. His name is Rev. J. G. Fackler, & he was on his way to the States to get his wife & family. [73]

The passengers are fearfully exercised, & well they may be, poor devils, for we are about to see our fifth death in five days, & the sixth of the voyage.—The Surgeon, a most excellent young man, a Mason, & a first rate physician & one of considerable practice, has done all he could to allay their fears by telling them he has all the medicines he wants, that the disease is only a virulent sort of diarrhea, Cholera Morbus, &c.

73 (Note from the editors of MTNJ) In fact, this was the Reverend St. M. Fackler, Episcopal clergyman from Boise City, Idaho. He had been seen off from San Francisco by a cousin, the Reverend J. G. Fackler, pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church. Mark Twain's confusion of the cousins, made public in his telegram in the Alta of 13 January 1867 (see pp. 296-297), would elicit an explanatory letter from the San Francisco clergyman which was published by the Alta three days later.

Discovering that he was a <Mason> XXX, I took him aside & asked him for a plain statement, for *myself alone* & told him I thought I was man enough to stand the truth in its worst form—

He then said the disease was cholera & of the most virulent type—that he had done all a man could do, but he had no medicines to work with—that he shipped the first time this trip & found the locker empty & no time to make a requisition for more medicines.

5 PM—That bolt-head broke day before yesterday & we lost two hours—

It broke again yesterday & we lost 3 or four hours.

It broke again this afternoon & again we lay like a log on the water (head wind) for 3 or 4 hours more.

These things distress the passengers beyond measure. They are scared about the epidemic & so impatient to get along—& now they have lost confidence in the ship & fear she may break again in the rough weather that is to come. I did not take any interest in the matter until just now I found the cursed little bolt was a sort of King-pin & that the engines must stop without it.

The passengers say we are out of luck & that it is a doomed voyage.

It appears, though of course it is kept from the passengers, that there are 7 or 8 patients in the hospital down below.

Lightning.

Off the coast of < Mexico, under> Gautemala, above one of the 8 volcanoes (remember the beautiful Indian Summer there), we saw lightning flash out of a cloud for the first time I can remember in 5 or 6 years—we hoped it would thunder but it didn't.

Some misgivings, some distress as to whether the authorities of Key West will let our pestilence-stricken ship land there—but the Capt. says we are in sore distress, in desperate strait, & we must land, we will land, in spite of orders, cannon or anything else—we cannot go on in this way.

If we do land, some of our people are going to leave—the doctor among them, who is afraid of the crazy machinery.

Sea in storm—caps crawling & squirming like white worms in the midst of ink.

JANUARY 6 th .—At two o'clock this morning, the Rev. Mr. Fackler died, and half an hour afterwards we landed at Key West. It is Sunday. Two of us attended Episcopal service here, and retired when they prepared to take the sacrament, and left a request at the

pastor’s house that he would preach the funeral sermon. We visited the cemetery in the edge of town, and then, supposing there was plenty of time, strolled through the principal streets and took some notes. When we got to the ship, a little after one o’clock, they said the funeral was already over.

Our Doctor told me it was Asiatic Cholera, but they must have deceived the port surgeon else they wouldnt have let us land.

I attended Episcopal service—heap of style—fashionably dressed women—350 of them & children & 25 men.

Don't see where so much dress comes from in a town made altogether of one & 2 story frames, some crazy, unpainted and with only thick board shutters for windows.—no carpets, no mats,—bare floors—cheap bloody prints on walls.

Only about 10 or 12 houses with any pretensions to style—& one half of these are military officer’s quarters. As half the style went up the street, I think they must have been military.

The contribution box fooled me—I heard no money dropping in it, & the paper currency never occurred to me.

Men stylishly dressed, & with yellow ribbon cravats.

Town full of cocoa-nut trees of the many-leaved, low, branching pattern—very pretty.

Girls singing in most houses.

Haven't seen a really pretty woman in town.

Roads are in 3 paths, with grass between—very few prints of wheels, or horse shoes, or cows hoofs either, for that matter—saw only one cow & two riding horses & one carriage—guess they go foot back mostly.

Duty on Havana cigars 300 per cent—on raw tobacco 35 only—so, import tobacco & then make cigars.

We bought 700 superb cigars at $4 a hundred—greenbacks—better cigars than could get in Cal for $25 a hundred in gold. Town is full of good cigars.

Got up a dinner party in town—our own claret & champagne was good, & there was nothing else good about the dinner except the fried eggs—& they didn’t hold out.

This is really a big town—big enough to hold over 2,000—though many houses seem deserted. Business mostly gin-mills—thats is for soldiers. It answers the question “What in the very devil is there here to support a population on this little barren rock in the sea with

no market no commerce, no communication with the world—not even a visible garden on it?" The fortification & the military establishment support it. Remove them & the town would go to the devil.

The people are very poor. A citizen said—"They'd sell the very shirts off their backs.

A steamer from N.O. to Havana touches here, Result, many Spanish here.

We passed through the nigger quarter—many black & jolly rascals here.

But those houses with no windows (only thick board shutters) beat my time.

They put me in the aftermost seat in cch with the niggers d—n them. They always gauge *me*, somehow or other.

They take greenbacks here for everything.

I cannot yet realize that I am back in America again.

Some of the passengers who were scared by the Cholera wanted to go to NO, but the steamer was too uncertain—they will go on to N.Y.

The surface of the ground is a coarse white sandstone like fish-eggs stuck together.

The island is hardly raised above sea level.

The eternal cactus (large prickly pear) grows all over these chapparals—& a tree which looks like inferior orange—& in all the yards are cocoa-nuts & tamarinds—rose of sharon, oleander & a thing which looks like century plant.

Jan. 7. Capt. Behm has just poked his head in at the window to say how lucky we were not to be quarantined at Key West (we are off—have just turned the pilot boat adrift)

The temperature of the Gulf Stream here (they try it every 2 hours for information Navy Dept.) is 76°—atmosphere 72. We are comfortable enough now while we are in this fluid stove, but when we leave it at Cape Hatteras Lord! it will be cold!

The speed of the stream varies from 1/3 m to 3 ½ m an hour. We have been making 200 & 210-20 m a day, but now in this current we can turn off 250-60-75.

The old man has wonderful charts compiled by Lt. Maury, which are crammed with shoals, & currents, & lights & buoys & soundings, & winds & calms & storms—black figures for soundings, bright spots for beacons, an interminable tangle like a spider's web of red lines denoting the tracks of hundreds of ships whose logs have been sent to Maury.

In the strongest current of the Gulf Stream at 4 this morning, off Jupiter Inlet—say 3 ½ m. Numerous bets we wouldn't make 250 miles.—we made 271 in the 24 hours ending at noon.

The next 24, current not so strong, but wind coming around promising to be free at any rate & maybe fair—so we may do it again.

350 m from Key West.

Jan. 10, 1867.—26 days out from Sanfrancisco to-day—at <7 AM> noon we shall be off Cape Hatteras & less than 400 miles south of New York—(day & a half's run.)

We shall leave this warming pan of a Gulf Stream to-day & then it will cease to be genial summer weather & become wintry cold.

We already see the signs—they have put feather mattresses & blankets on our berths this morning.

It is raining—warm.

Rainy. At 11 AM 18 miles from Cape Hatteras—thence to N.Y. 320 miles.

8 sick—5 diarrhea—3 convalescent—2 better.

Passing out of the Gulf Stream rapidly—at 2 PM the temperature of the water had fallen 7 degrees in half an hour—from 72 down to 65—we are about out of the warming pan & already the day is turning cold & overcoats coming into vogue.

At 2.30 P.M. Temperature of water 2 degrees low—[only] 63.

A 3PM. Temperature Water 61.

11.30 PM—Dark & stormy & the ship plunging considerably. It is villainously cold. Have just come forward from the purser's room & felt something blow in my face like snow—think it was—but too dark to tell.Jan. 11, 7 PM—Been in bed all day to keep warm—fearfully cold.

We are off Barnegat—passed a pilot boat a while ago.

We shall get to New York before morning.

Out four weeks—28 days—at noon, Saturday Jan, 12, 1867 from Sanfrancisco.

January 12 Saturday – About 8 AM, the San Francisco steamed into the icy harbor of New York.

> We swore the ship through at quarantine, which was right—she hadn't had any real cholera on board since we left Greytown—and at 8 o'clock this morning we stood in the biting air of the upper deck and sailed by the snow-covered, wintry looking residences on Staten Island—recognized Castle Garden [in the Battery]—beheld the vast city spread out beyond, encircled with its palisade of masts, and adorned with its hundred steeples—saw the steam-tug and ferryboats swarming through the floating ice, instinct with a frenzied energy, as we passed the [East] river—and in a little while we were ashore and safe housed at the Metropolitan. [74]

The shipping company planted a story in the New York Herald that blamed the passenger deaths not on an outbreak of cholera but on the consumption of unripe tropical fruit by the passengers during the crossing of Nicaragua, "an indiscretion against which the officers of the steamships" always cautioned people. That is, the company refused to assume responsibility for the fatalities. Sam apparently failed to challenge the malfeasance and corporate cover-up, though he must have known it was a lie, It was exactly the type of hypocrisy he relished exposing in later years. But on this occasion, as in Esmeralda and Humboldt Counties in Nevada in 1861, he was simply a prospector looking to strike it rich.[75]

Sam took a room at the Metropolitan Hotel, a favorite stop for Californians and Washoe miners at the corner of Broadway and Prince Street. The voyage from hell was over and cholera had not claimed Mark Twain. Sam sent a telegram to the Alta California giving details of the cholera outbreak aboard the steamer San Francisco. Sam planned to publish a book on the Sandwich Islands based on his letters to the Sacramento Union. He also wanted to schedule a lecture tour in New York and perhaps other eastern cities. Lastly, he had a vague plan to embark on a world tour for the Alta. Sam was not without contacts in New York journalism and literary circles.

74 Alta March 23, 1867
75 Scharnhorst pp 371-3

New York and the Midwest:

New York:

THE only trouble about this town is, that it is too large. You cannot accomplish anything in the way of business, you cannot even pay a friendly call, without devoting a whole day to it - that is, what people call a whole day who do not get up early. Many business men only give audience from eleven to one; therefore, if you miss those hours your affair must go over till next day. Now if you make the time at one place, even though you stay only ten or fifteen minutes, you can hardly get to your next point, because so many things and people will attract your attention and your conversation and curiosity, that the other three quarters of that hour will be frittered away. You have but one hour left, and my experience is that a man cannot go anywhere in New York in an hour. The distances are too great - you must have another day to it. If you have got six things to do, you have got to take six days to do them in.

If you live below Twenty-fifth street, you are "down town;" and if you live anywhere between that and Seven Hundred and Seventy-fifth street (I don't know how far they run - have quit trying to find out), you will never get down town with out walking the legs off yourself. You cannot ride. I mean you cannot ride unless you are willing to go in a packed omnibus that labors, and plunges, and struggles along at the rate of three miles in four hours and a half, always getting left behind by fast walkers, and always apparently hopelessly tangled up with vehicles that are trying to get to some place or other and can't. Or, if you can stomach it, you can ride in a horse-car and stand up for three-quarters of an hour, in the midst of a file of men that extends from front to rear (seats all crammed, of course,) - or you can take one of the platforms, if you please, but they are so crowded you will have to hang on by your eye-lashes and your toe-nails.

I room in East Sixteenth street, and I walk. It is a mighty honest walk from there to anywhere else, and very destructive to legs, but then the omnibuses are too slow during this mixed rainy, snowy, slushy and hard-frozen weather, and the cars too full - there is never room for another person by the time they get this far down town. The cars do not run in Broadway, any how, and I do not like to wander out of that street. I always get lost when I do. The town is all changed since I was here, thirteen years ago, when I was a pure and sinless sprout. The streets wind in and out, and this way and that way, in the most bewildering fashion, and two of them will suddenly come together and clamp the last house between them so close, and whittle the end of it down so sharp, that it looms up like the bow of a steam ship, and you have to shut one eye to see it. The streets are so crooked in the lower end of town that if you take one and follow it faithfully you will eventually fetch up right where you started from.[76]

WHAT SIX YEARS HAVE WROUGHT

76 Alta March 28

They have increased the population of New York and its suburbs a quarter of a million souls. They have built up her waste places with acres upon acres of costly buildings. They have made five thousand men wealthy, and for a good round million of her citizens they have made it a matter of the closest kind of scratching to get along in the several spheres of life to which they belong. The brown-stone fronter and the rag-picker of the Five Points have about an even thing of it; the times are as hard for one as for the other; both struggle desperately to hold their places, and both grumble and grieve to much the same tune. What advantage there is, though, is all in favor of the rag-picker - he can only starve or freeze, but the other can lose caste, which is worse.

The old, genuine, travelled, cultivated, pedigreed aristocracy of New York, stand stunned and helpless under the new order of things. They find themselves supplanted by upstart princes of Shoddy, vulgar and with unknown grandfathers. The incomes, which were something for the common herd to gape at and gossip about once, are mere livelihoods now - would not pay Shoddy's house-rent. They move into remote new streets up town, and talk feelingly of the crash which is to come when the props are knocked from under this flimsy edifice of prosperity. And, to tell the truth, a part of the crash is already here; and the sooner it comes in its might and restores the old, sure, plodding prosperity, the better. Heavy failures are frequent, but people seem to dislike to talk about them - dread the subject, maybe. If everybody goes to Paris in the summer, that movement will not assist any in keeping up the present ruinous prices of living. Government is helping to bring the crash, too. She is drawing all idle capital away from public improvements and other great new enterprises. Her bonds pay better and surer interest than railroad investments, mortgages, etc., and the money is not taxed. People grumble bitterly that they cannot borrow money against such formidable competition as the U. S. Government. Everything is high. That was well enough in war time, when a million men in full employment under Government pay made help scarce and money plenty as dust. But now, with that million discharged, of course help is plenty and money scarce. Yet all hands conspire to keep up prices. No man can afford to be the first to make a move toward lowering the figures.

You pay twelve hundred dollars rental, now, for the dwelling you used to get for five or six hundred. For a store you pay - well, you pay all you can make, and then turn your stock of goods over to your landlord at the end of the year. One firm here had occupied the same premises many years - a firm of sixty years standing. They used to pay $3,000; during the war the figure went up to $6,000; was raised afterwards to $12,000; this year they were told they must pay $18,000 or move. They moved.

You pay $20 to $25 and $30 a week for the same sort of private board and lodging you got for $8 and $10 when I was here thirteen years ago. You can board and lodge at the best hotels in the city for the same money - $4.50 a day. Still, both the hotels and the boarding houses are all full.

Butter is worth sixty cents a pound, eggs sixty cents a dozen, and other things about the same. What they call good cigars are three or four for a dollar. A dozen raw oysters are worth from forty to eighty cents, according to where you buy them. An oyster stew is worth from twenty to forty cents. You pay twenty cents to get shaved; six cents to ride in the horse-cars and ten in the omnibuses. Beggars charge two cents now. Crossing-sweeps demand toll going and coming, both. An old woman had a peanut shelf in a contracted corner - rent, $25 a month; they raised her to $50; she stood the raise and continued business; then they raised her to $75, and this time they raised her out.

Simple, "straight" whiskey, gin, and such things, are fifteen cents; brandy and mixed beverages, twenty-five, (and they don't know how to mix them - besides their whiskey is bound to make a temperance man of a toper in a year or kill him.) If you order a glass of champagne, you must pay for the whole bottle. Peanuts, hickory nuts and roast chestnuts are twenty cents a pint - say $25 a bushel - used to be worth two or three dollars. A choice seat in the theatre costs $1.50, and I suppose they would tax you to let you blow your nose anywhere within the city limits. Hackmen charge you $2.50 to take you around the block, or $10 to $12 a day. Late at night they charge you what they please. Pew rent is just about as high as house rent. Therefore, few men can afford to indulge in matrimony and religion both. In a word, I find that with due moderation, a single man can get along after a fashion for forty to fifty dollars a week. God help the married ones! Independent ! You never saw such an independent set in your life as landlords, barbers, bar-keepers and tradesmen are. They don't care a cent whether you go, stay, buy or let it alone. I think they have sent agents far and near and drummed up all the worthless barbers in the world and set them up in New York. I believe they sharpen their razors on the curbstone. They snatch all the beard out of your face in about two minutes, swab your jaws a little with a damp rag, put a microscopic drop of oil on your hair, give it one rub forward, another backward, and a third sideways, stack it up in a ragged pile on top of your head like a Street Commissioner's monument, and let you go. And you go, hoping your beard will never grow again.

But the popular bar-keeper is the serenest villain of the lot. You have seen a vile, infernal waiter stand staring at vacancy with his complacent, exasperating smirk, pretending he didn't know you had been trying to attract his attention for ten minutes - well, the popular bar-keeper mimics that to a charm. He even improves on it. When a party of gentlemen finally get him to notice them after much rattling of glasses, he don't bow and smile and say "What will you have, gentlemen?" But he turns languidly upon them with an expression of countenance obtrusively intended to inform them that he knew they were calling all the time, and then stares impertinently at them without a word. That means, "Well, if you are going to name your drinks, you had better do it, that's all!" It has a most excellent tendency - it soon stops people from drinking.

If a man asks the popular cigar-vendor "Which are the best?" he intimates that he isn't paid to choose cigars for people, or relieves his mind of some similar incivility. Prosperity is the surest breeder of insolence I know of.

New Yorkers are singular people, somehow or other. Here, in their own home, they have the name among strangers of being excessively unsociable; but take them in any part of the world, outside their State limits, and they are the most liberal, pleasant and companionable people you can find. However, if I take my personal experience instead of the evidence of others, I must confess that I cannot find any fault with them here in their home, any more than I could abroad.[77]

New York to St Louis

March 3 Sunday – On a snowy night Sam left New York for St. Louis on the 8 o'clock New Jersey Central. It was a 52-hour rail connection.

Sam Clemens probably crossed from New York to New Jersey on the Communipaw Ferry, between Communipaw Terminal in Jersey City and Liberty Street Ferry Terminal in Manhattan, then taken the New Jersey Central to Easton. After this I have found little information regarding his route.
Letter to the Alta California:

St. Louis,
March 15th, 1867.

HAPPY

EDITORS ALTA: We took passage in the cars of the New Jersey Central at 8 P.M. of the 3d of March, and left port in the midst of a cheerful snow-storm. I call it cheerful because there is something exquisitely satisfactory in whistling along through a shrouded land, following blindly wherever the demon in the lead may take you, yet sensible that he knows the way, and will steer his unerring course as faithfully as if it were noonday; sensible also that you are as safe there as anywhere, sitting with back against the bulkhead, and feet crossed on the next seat, and hat drawn down to shade the eyes from the lamp overhead - sitting thus by the comfortable fire, smoking placidly and dreaming of other times and other scenes,

77 Alta 5 April

taking small heed of the storm without, yet scarcely conscious that it is snowing and is blowing drearily across the bleak moor as well, and that some people are out there suffering in it, and distressed, but that you ain't; that, on the contrary, you are perfectly happy, and tranquil, and satisfied, sitting thus, and smoking, and dreaming, and being timed and soothed by the clatter of the wheels - well, you know there is something unspeakably comfortable about it.

UNHAPPY

That was the way I felt from eight till a little after twelve; (the sleeping-cars were full and I had to sit up all night.) I had been talking latterly to a young soldier who had been all through the wars, from Bull Run to Lee's surrender - a beardless veteran full of battle experiences and tales of camp and prison life and was now within a hundred miles of his home, almost, for the first time in six years - handsome, modest, honest, good-hearted boy of twenty-three, and more ready to tell about his school-boy days than his six charges at Antietam - but gone the warrior was, and I was alone. Then I began to feel crampy a little, and then chilly - and presently I noticed that the fire was very low, and remembered that I had seen no one doctor it for over three hours. I got up and tried to open the stove door, but could not do it. A drowsy neighbor said it was locked, to keep the passengers from burning too much coal! I looked again, and found the keyhole - so it was true. The man said this was done "on all them d-----d Jersey monopoler roads." I grew chilly fast, then, and gradually grew peevish and fretful, also. I observed that the furniture was mean and old, and that the train moved slowly, and stopped to land a passenger every three hundred yards. After that, every time we stopped I cursed the railroad till we started again, and that afforded me some little satisfaction. I observed, also, that the usual mean man was aboard, who kept his window a little open to distress his fellows. And after that I noticed how fearfully dismal and unhappy the passengers looked, doubled up in uncomfortable attitudes on short seats in the dim, funereal light - like so many corpses, they looked, of people who had died of care and weariness. And then I said I would rather walk than travel that route again, and I wished the Company would burst up 60 completely that there wouldn't be money enough left to give the Directors Christian burial, but I hoped they might need it shortly.

I shall never be able to express how glad I was when the gray dawn stole over the plain, and the sun followed and cheered the scene, and the train stopped and I gave my limbs a grateful stretch, and steeped my sorrowful soul in inspiring coffee.

INSIGNIFICANCE IN OFFICE

The conductor was pompous and discourteous, as natural wood-sawyers in office are apt to be. Your dog with a brass collar with his master's name on it, is ever prone to snub the undecorated dog. Brown plied the fellow with questions at every opportunity, and scorned all rebuffs. He asked him with fine irony, if that train ever ran by a town before they could stop it; and when he was fiercely answered "No," he said he thought such a thing might be

possible, but he had not gone so far as to consider it probable. And he wanted to know if this was the country where the "Jersey lightning" of history came from, and if they had any of it aboard that train. When we finally ran over a cow, he felt better satisfied about the speed of the train, because, as he said, he knew we must be going along tolerably lively else we could not have overtaken the cow.

Brown said to the brakeman, "Your brother, the conductor, gets forty or fifty thousand dollars a year, maybe, I reckon?"

"No-he gets ten or fifteen hundred, if it's anything to you."

"Possible? Why I wouldn't have thought that a man could afford to put on forty-five thousand dollars' worth of frills for fifteen hundred without losing money and getting discouraged."

PHOTOGRAPH OF PITTSBURG, ETC.

We got to Pittsburg at 2 P.M., 431 miles, 18 hours out, 25 miles an hour. Pittsburg, as we saw it, is a vast, impenetrable bank of black smoke, and two or three long bridges stretching across a river. It is very picturesque. All through Pennsylvania the houses looked old and shabby - that is, all through the country .[78]

The Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne & Chicago Railroad would have taken him from Pittsburgh to Alliance. How he got to Indianapolis from there is not clear. He may have continued on the PFW&C to Crestline and changed trains to the Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati and Indianapolis Railway. This could be where he changed from a Smoking Car to a sleeping car, at 3am. From Indianapolis, the Terre Haute and Indianapolis Railroad went to Terre Haute. From there the Terre Haute, Alton and St Louis Railroad went to East St Louis.

We supped at Alliance, Ohio, and took sleeping cars for Indianapolis. And what a luxury the berth was, both in anticipation and reality! Knowing I had a bed sure, I had no occasion to hurry. So I smoked till three in the morning and then undressed and turned in. It was a sort of palace. The berth was wide enough for three, and I had the whole stateroom to myself. I compelled Brown to sit up all night, so that he could come and tell me in case the train ran off the track.

It was worth the forty hours I had gone without sleep to feel the luxury of lying down between clean sheets and stretching out at full length - and drawing up and stretching out again - and turning over and fetching another celestial stretch. The music of the wheels was so tranquilizing, too. I dropped off to sleep, lulled by the ceaseless racket, and woke up at Indianapolis at 9 A.M.

From Indianapolis to St. Louis we did as we had from the first - stopped at some shanty or other every fifteen minutes to discharge or take in forty cents worth of passengers, and if there is anything more aggravating than that, I do not know what it is. We reached St.

78 Alta 13 May

> Louis, eleven hundred miles from New York, fifty-two hours out, and if we had come straight through we might have done it in half the time. I went straight home and sat up till breakfast time, talking and telling other lies.[79]

Lectures in the Midwest

St Louis

March 5 Tuesday – Sam arrived in St. Louis at midnight after sitting up for two nights in coach due to full sleeping cars. Sam was returning home after six years and four months. He went directly to his sister Pamela's house at 12 Chestnut Street, where he "sat up till breakfast time, talking and telling lies." Sam's niece, Annie Moffett, was almost fifteen and his namesake nephew, Sammy, was six. [80]

March 17 Sunday – Sam was asked to make a few remarks to a Sunday school, at his sister Pamela's church. Sam told the "Jumping Frog" story, but could not supply a moral from the story, so "let it slide". [81]

March 24 Sunday – Sam was asked to speak at a Sunday school in Carondelet, a town bordering St. Louis. Sam told the John Godfrey sky-rocket story that later appeared in *Roughing It.* [82]

March 25 Monday – In St. Louis, Sam gave his "Sandwich Islands" lecture to a standing room only crowd at Mercantile Library Hall for the benefit of the South St. Louis Mission Sunday School.

March 26 Tuesday – At Mercantile Library Hall in St. Louis, Sam repeated the lecture, but due to bad weather only about 80 showed up. In the audience was Henry M. Stanley of Livingstone fame, reporting for a Missouri paper. Stanley took down much of Sam's lecture in shorthand. [83]

The audience was large and appreciative, and financially and every other way the entertainment proved a complete success. In fact, Mark Twain achieved a very decided success. He succeeded in doing what we have seen Emerson and other literary magnates fail in attempting. He interested and amused a large and promiscuous audience. Mark has the gift of a bright and happy fancy, and expresses his thoughts with no ordinary force and gracefulness of language. His descriptive powers are good, and his descriptive powers very fair for a young lecturer. Sam received three invitations to lecture at Hannibal, Keokuk, and Quincy. He accepted all three. [84] . Lorch says these were "invitations, rather than any direct efforts of scheduling on his part". [85]

Mark Twain explained, in another Alta dispatch, that on 17 March he had been asked to "make a few remarks" to a Sunday school, and that he "told that admiring multitude all about Jim Smiley's Jumping Frog," which in turn led to a more formal invitation. "I did not intend to lecture in St. Louis, but I got a call to do something of that kind for the benefit of a Sunday School."

Publicity both for and from these two lectures soon prompted at least three further invitations to lecture in towns along the river, which he accepted, starting with Hannibal, where on 2 April he lectured in Brittingham Hall "to

79 Alta 13 May
80 [MTL 2: 18n1,3].
81 [MTL 2: 19 n2].
82 DBD.
83 Lorch p 56 See Mar. 28 entry. On the first performance, from the St. Louis Daily Missouri Republican:
84 [MTL 2: 19n2]
85 Lorch p 57

the largest and most delighted crowd ever gathered in a public hall in that city." He then spoke at Keokuk, Iowa, on 8 April and at Quincy, Illinois, on 9 April.

St. Louis,
March 25th, 1867.

AT HOME AGAIN

EDITORS ALTA: I landed here in my old home more than three weeks ago, and have been very busy visiting old friends ever since. The changes that years have wrought in the city are not apparent to me. It is because they have chiefly been made at both ends of the town, and I have not been out of its centre yet. And, also, the buildings that have been put up all through my part of the city are so blackened and begrimed with coal smoke that I cannot persuade myself that I have not been perfectly familiar with them in the old times. When I left St. Louis she had a population of 150,000, and they called it 175,000; now she has a population of 204,000, and they call it 250,000. But you will admit that an increase of over fifty thousand in less than seven years is remarkable for an inland town.

Bremen and Carondelet are great cities now, and are so knitted to the main city that the dividing lines are obliterated. They tell me that one may ride ten or twelve miles in a straight line north and south without changing street cars - I mean to test the truth of it.

One of the things that is constantly surprising me is the way the reality diminishes sizes and distances that have been lying on record in my memory so long. In my recollection, the Court House was something prodigious - almost awe-inspiring; but when I came to look at it the other day, it had shrunken so much that I could not understand how it had ever held so large a place in my memory. The house I had always lived in had undergone the same wonderful process of seeming reduction. But you who have revisited your homes, after years of absence, understand this.

Localities which, in my memory, were long distances apart, I am astounded to find close together now. I start out for a moderate walk, and am amazed to find myself at the Mound or the Shot Tower - and right in town at that. Or I go in another direction and stumble on the Soulard Market, when I thought it was miles away. I find the Cave, and Camp Springs, and Lafayette Park, when I am no more expecting them than I am expecting to stumble upon Great Salt Lake City. Why, sixteen or seventeen years ago, nobody thought of walking to these distant places; we made important Sunday excursions to them in omnibuses, at long intervals.

WHERE THE CHANGE IS

I find no change of consequence in grown people, I do not miss the dead. It does not surprise me to hear that this friend or that friend died at such and such a time, because I fully expected that sort of news. But somehow I had made no calculation on the infants. It had never occurred to me that infants grow up to be men and women in the course of

years, and so I caught my self making such inquiries as, "Well, how is little Johnny; does he eat as much candy as ever?" and getting replies that made me feel inexpressibly old - such as, "No, little Johnny is married now, and is Captain of a steamboat." Infants I had not seen for twelve or fifteen years had remained infants to me during all that time. These unexpected changes, from infancy to youth, and from youth to maturity, are by far the most startling things I meet with. Girls I used to trot on my knee could trot me that way now, if they wanted to - but somehow they don't. I meet these infants every day; and in place of the little short dresses and bibs and neglected noses I cherished in my memory, I find stately women, and long trails, and awful waterfalls. It is perfectly stunning. However, I am generally allowed a kiss for old acquaintance sake, and I am sorry now that I didn't know all the female babies in the country when I left. One of my old sweet hearts I have been dreaming of so long has got five children now. It was a great blow to me. If she had had fifty I couldn't have stood it at all.

STEAMBOATING

I find the long levee bordered with steamboats its entire length, as formerly, and now that the Mobile and Ohio Railroad is mostly under water, they are doing a heavy business South. The other river trades are good also. A great daily line of splendid boats, which connects with European steamers at New Orleans, does most of the carrying, both in freight and passengers, but it has not paid, and it is thought that the company will sell out this summer and quit.

The lower river boats are being made larger and larger every year. The Great Republic, just finished at Louisville, will carry in the neighborhood of three thousand tons - possibly more; even her Custom House measurement is twenty-five hundred tons. The largest load I ever saw one steamboat take into New Orleans was eighteen hundred tons, and that was bragged about for a long time.

FEMALE SUFFRAGE

The women of Missouri have started a sensation on their own hook. They are petitioning the Legislature to so provide for the amending of the Constitution as to extend to them the privilege of voting (along with us and the nigs., you know). They published one of these petitions a few days ago, with about two hundred names to it, and among them were those of some of the best known and most influential ladies of St. Louis. Thirty-nine members of the Legislature have declared in favor of the movement. Don't you know that such a showing as that is amazing, in view of the colossal dimensions of the proposed innovation? It strikes me that way. If four or five hen-pecked husbands, or badgered and bully-ragged old bachelors, had been driven into a support of the measure, nobody would have been surprised; but when the list soars up to thirty-nine, it is time for all good men to tremble for their country.

I attacked the monster in the public prints, and raised a small female storm, but it occurred to me that it might get uncommon warm for one poor devil against all the crinoline in the camp, and so I antied up and passed out, as the Sabbath School children say.

I don't want to say much about this subject in the ALTA, because the ladies may take it up on the Pacific next, and I don't want to get myself into trouble there also.

PREACHING AGAIN

I went to church twice last Sunday, and to Sunday School three times (all my folks live here, and I have got to go mighty slow, you know; I infest all the prayer meetings and church "sociables," and conduct myself in a manner which is as utterly unexceptionable as it is outrageously irksome. I have kept up my lick so far, as the missionaries say, but I don't think I can stand it much longer. I never could bear to be respectable long at a stretch). Sunday afternoon, the Superintendent of one of those populous Sunday Schools came around to my pew and asked me if I had ever had any experience in instructing the young - in addressing Sunday Schools. I said, "My son, it is my strong suit." (I was still keeping up my lick, as the missionaries say.)

He said he would be glad if I would get up in the altar and make a few remarks, and I said it would be the proudest moment of my life. So I got up there and told that admiring multitude all about Jim Smiley's Jumping Frog; and I will do myself the credit to say that my efforts were received with the most rapturous applause, and that those of the solemn deacon's to stop it were entirely unheeded by the audience. I honestly intended to draw an instructive moral from that story, but when I got to the end of it I couldn't discover that there was any particular moral sticking out around it anywhere, and so I just let it slide. However, it don't matter. I suppose those children will cipher a moral out of it somehow, because they are so used to that sort of thing. I gained my main point, anyhow, which was to make myself respected in California, because you know you cannot help but respect a man who makes speeches to Sunday Schools, and devotes his time to instructing youth.

I did not intend to lecture in St. Louis, but I got a call to do something of that kind for the benefit of a Sunday School; and as long as I had to keep up my lick anyway, I thought I had better go ahead. So I preached twice in the Mercantile Library Hall. I haven't vanity enough to print all that the newspapers said, but I will venture to extract a fourth of the Republican's notice:

"The audience was large and appreciative, and financially and every other way, the entertainment proved a complete success. In fact, Mark Twain achieved a very decided success. He succeeded in doing what we have seen Emerson and other literary magnates fail in attempting - he interested and amused a large and promiscuous audience. We shall attempt no synopsis of his entertainment. Ostensibly it was on the Sandwich Islands but while it contained not a little valuable information and many passages of felicitous description, it also embraced many other topics geographically and otherwise foreign to the

matter in hand, and had many a piquant piece of humor interwoven, which, with the bright flash of genuine wit, startled with laughter and kept alive the attention of the audience."

I think that is pretty complimentary, considering that when I delivered that lecture I was not acquainted with a single newspaper man in St. Louis. I do not do anything here but gad around among old friends. But if you want to know the places where audiences are jolly, and where they snap up a joke before you can fairly get it out of your mouth, they are St. Louis, San Francisco, San Jose and Carson City.

BAD GOVERNMENT

The Mayor of St. Louis is elected by the people, and the Board of Police Commissioners is appointed by the Governor of the State. The Commissioners appoint the Chief of Police, the Street Inspector, the police force, etc. This plan pretty effectually prevents the turning of the police part of the City Government into a machine for hoisting demagogues and politicians into power, and is a good feature. But for some reason or other the Mayor and the Commissioners have fallen out with each other and do nothing but fight like cats and dogs all the time. One party accuses the other of all sorts of outrageous things in newspaper publications, and the next day out comes a furious reply from the other side. It spices our breakfast handsomely, anyhow. The Commissioners say that during the cholera season, when people were dying so fast that carts were sent around and dead bodies dumped in by the dozen without the formality of being shrouded first, the Mayor kept two hundred corpses stacked up on a sandbar at the lower end of the city, and refused for four days to let them be buried by the servants of the city - said it was the county government's place to bury them; the county held out obstinately, and so did the Mayor; so the Commissioners had to fill a detachment of policemen full of whiskey, so that they wouldn't mind the lively flavor of the departed, and stand guard over them as long as they held together, and they say that all those twenty-two policemen had to be kept full of whiskey during all that four days at a ruinous expense - and you know yourself that you could bury a whole community for less money than it would cost to keep twenty-two policemen in soak for four days. It stands to reason that you could. And finally, the citizens in the neighborhood, not being fortified with whiskey, began to consider the perfume from the dead-house as rather disagreeable, and so they went to work and burned it down, with all its fearful cargo. Since I have been in the city, the child of an indigent woman has lain four days unburied because of this quarrel between the police, the Mayor, and the county. How ever, the child was not dead, and so I suppose there wasn't really any occasion to bury it. But it showed the animus of the thing, you know. The Commissioners say the Mayor shelters the gamblers and thieves, protects them from arrest when he can, and gets them out of prison when they are incarcerated. In return, the Mayor says the Commissioners do not make the Street Officer do his duty; that dead-falls and pit-holes are left exposed everywhere, with not even a lantern near them at night to warn the stranger; says they lie about him, and never attend to their own duties; and he says he disguised himself one night and walked eighty squares without ever finding a policeman, except a squad of half a dozen, whom he caught warming themselves at a stove in a gin-mill. I guess that story is

pretty straight. You know yourself that when a policeman is cold he is going to hunt a place to warm himself the first thing, and when he is warm he will skirmish around for a cool place; and whenever things get dull, and he can't find anything in the world to do to pass away the time, he will just get reckless and go on his beat awhile, maybe. You can't tell me anything about the police, because I know them by the back. I like the police well enough, but I don't consider it judgment to bet on them.

This Mayor here is a mighty plain-spoken man. He wrote to the Convention that he had never sought an office and never wanted one; that he had served two terms as Mayor, but never thanked the people for electing him, and never thanked the Convention for nominating him; said he didn't want the office now and wouldn't thank them to nominate him, and wouldn't thank the people if they elected him. He wanted that understood plainly beforehand - he was not going to be under obligations to any body. And they went ahead, nevertheless, and nominated him by a vote of about ten to one. He will be elected, I suppose, and if he has got a spark of humanity in him he will start a grave yard on his own private account to bury disputed corpses in.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The public schools of St. Louis are in a far more flourishing condition than those of any other Southern city or state. A two mill tax and the revenues from ample school lands furnish all the money necessary to build or rent all the school-houses needed, and furnish them with teachers and other furniture. The total value of property used for school purposes in St. Louis is $533,440.95. The average number of teachers employed is 204; the number of pupils enrolled is 14,556 - this is an increase of 5,000 in nine years. Two-thirds of the pupils were born in St. Louis. The Normal School shows a graduating class of twenty six this year. The High School graduating class numbers twenty seven. The total number of public school-houses in the city is thirty.

The Superintendent's Report, now before me, says of the colored schools ordered by State law, that "the efforts of the Board to establish schools for colored children have not as yet been successful," but that a special committee has been ordered to rent proper buildings and open such schools without any delay that can possibly be avoided. The new Webster and Carroll school-houses, just completed, rank among the finest edifices in the city. They cost respectively $35,000 and $40,000.

As to wages of teachers, the female Principal of the Normal School gets $2,000 a year; one female assistant $1,100 and one $850. The male Principal of the High School gets $2,750; one male assistant, $2,000; three male assistants, $1,700 each; one female assistant, $1,200; two female assistants, $1,000 each, and another $700. Nine male Principals of the District Schools get $1,700 each; three others $1,500 each; three female Principals get $l,000 each; eight female Principals get $900 each; and then there is a whole raft of small-fry female teachers who get from $550 to $700. Two music teachers get $1,500 each.

They don't teach French or Latin or such things in the District Schools, but they run a good deal of German and mental arithmetic, and a new-fangled study they call Moral Culture. I don't recollect it in our school. [86]

Hannibal

March 27 Wednesday ca. – On or about this day Sam traveled to Hannibal, where he stayed about a week. [87]

April 2 Tuesday – Sam lectured in Brittingham Hall in his old hometown of Hannibal. [88] . Hannibal gave Sam the largest turnout in its history, though turning out wasn't what put Hannibal on the map.

April 2 - Brittingham Hall, Hannibal, Missouri

Brittingham Hall was better known as the Avery Burch Building. Built as an opera house and meeting hall in 1859 by the Brittingham Brothers who had a thriving drug store, the building had a rich history over the next century. It was used as a military hospital and possibly a prison during the Civil War.

HANNIBAL - BY A NATIVE HISTORIAN

Hannibal has had a hard time of it ever since I can recollect, and I was "raised" there. First, it had me for a citizen, but I was too young then to really hurt the place. Next, Jimmy Finn, the town drunkard, reformed, and that broke up the only saloon in the village. But the temperance people liked it; they were willing enough to sacrifice public prosperity to public morality. And 80 they made much of Jimmy Finn - dressed him up in new clothes, and had him out to breakfast and to dinner, and so forth, and showed him off as a great living curiosity - a shining example of the power of temperance doctrines when earnestly and eloquently set forth. Which was all very well, you know, and sounded well, and looked well in print, but Jimmy Finn couldn't stand it. He got remorseful about the loss of his liberty; and then he got melancholy from thinking about it so much; and after that, he got drunk. He got awfully drunk in the chief citizen's house, and the next morning that house was as if the swine had tarried in it. That outraged the temperance people and delighted the opposite faction. The former rallied and reformed Jim once more, but in an evil hour temptation came upon him, and he sold his body to a doctor for a quart of whiskey, and that ended all his earthly troubles. He drank it all at one sitting, and his soul went to its long account and his body went to Dr. Grant. This was another blow to Hannibal. Jimmy Finn had always kept the town in a sweat about something or other, and now it nearly died from utter inanition.

After this, Joe Dudding, a reckless speculator, started a weekly stage to the town of Florida, thirty miles away, where a couple of families were living, and Hannibal revived very perceptibly under this wild new sensation.

86 Alta May 19, 1867
87 Lorch p 57
88 [MTL 2: 19n2]

But then the scarlet fever came, and the hives, and between them they came near hiving all the children in the camp. And so Hannibal took another back-set. But pretty soon a weekly newspaper was started, which bred a fierce spirit of enterprise in the neighboring farmers, because when they had any small potatoes left over that they couldn't sell, they didn't throw them away as they used to do, but they took them to the editor and traded them off for subscriptions to his paper. But finally the potato-rot got him, and Hannibal was floored again.

However, somebody started a pork-house, and the little village showed signs of life once more. And then came the measles and blighted it. It stayed blighted a good while, too.

After a while they got to talking about building a plank road to New London, ten miles away, and after another while, they built it. This made business. Then they got excited and built a gravel road to Paris, 30 or 40 miles. More business. They got into a perfect frenzy and talked of a railroad - an actual rail road - a railroad 200 miles long - a railroad from Hannibal to St. Joseph! And behold, in the fullness of time - in ten or fifteen years - they built it.

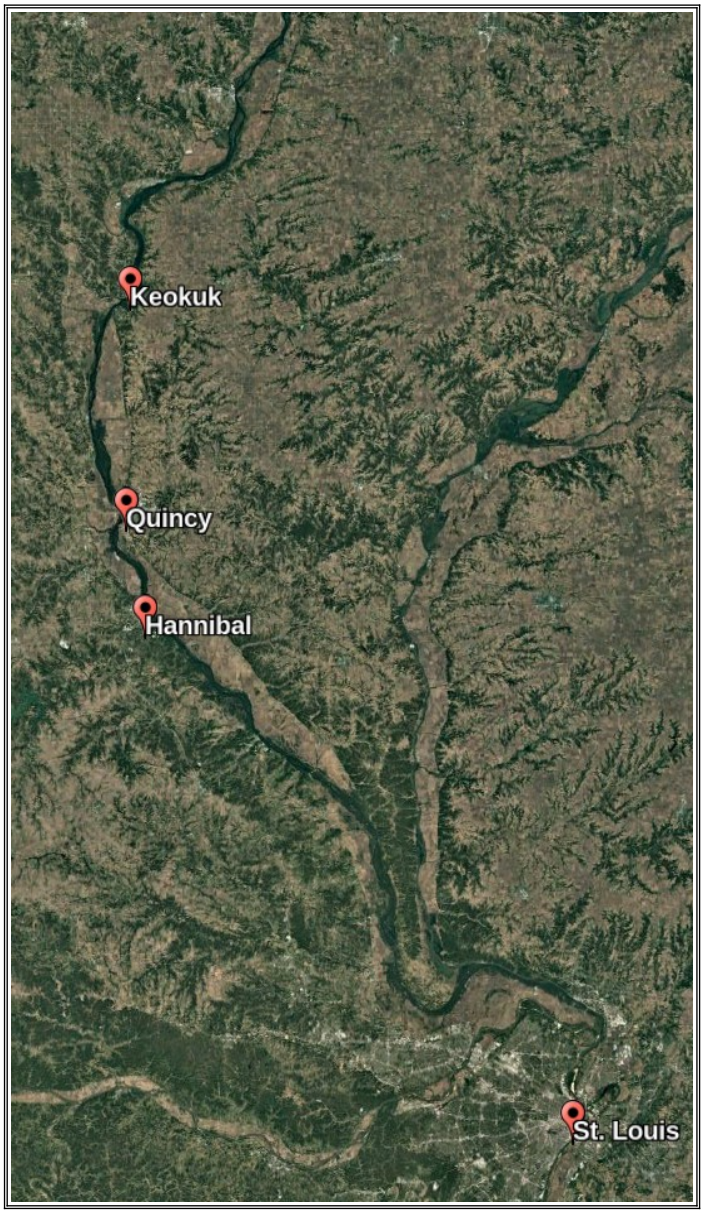
A sure enough prosperity burst upon the community, now. Property went up. It was noted as a significant fact that instead of selling town-lots by the acre people began to sell them by the front foot. Hannibal grew fast - doubled its population in two years, started a daily paper or two, and came to be called a city - sent for a fire engine and had her out, bedecked with ribbons, on Fourth of July, but the engine-house burned down one night and destroyed her, which cast a gloom over the whole community. And they started militia companies, and Sons of Temperance and Cadets of Temperance. Hannibal always had a weakness for the Temperance cause. I joined the Cadets myself, although they didn't allow a boy to smoke, or drink or swear, but I thought I never could be truly happy till I wore one of those stunning red scarfs and walked in procession when a distinguished citizen died. I stood it four months, but never an infernal distinguished citizen died during the whole time; and when they finally pronounced old Dr. Norton convalescent (a man I had been depending on for seven or eight weeks,) I just drew out. I drew out in disgust, and pretty much all the distinguished citizens in the camp died within the next three weeks.

Well, Hannibal's prosperity seemed to be of a permanent nature, but St. Louis built the North Missouri Railroad and hurt her, and Quincy tapped the Hannibal and St. Joe in one or two places, which hurt her still worse, and then the war came, and the closing years of it almost finished her.

Now they are trying to build a branch railroad to some place in the interior they call Moberly, at a cost of half a million, and if that fails some of the citizens will move. They only talk Moberly now. The church members still talk about religion, but they mix up a good deal of Moberly in it. The young ladies talk fashion and Moberly, and the old ones talk of charity and temperance, piety, the grave, and Moberly. Hannibal will get Moberly, and it will save her. It will bring back the old prosperity. But won't they have to build another road to protect

the Moberly? and another and another to protect each enterprise of the kind? A railroad is like a lie - you have to keep building to it to make it stand. A railroad is a ravenous destroyer of towns, unless those towns are put at the end of it and a sea beyond, so that you can't go further and find another terminus. And it is shaky trusting them, even then, for there is no telling what may be done with trestle-work. Which reminds me of

JIM TOWNSEND'S TUNNEL ….[89]



April 16, 1867:

UP THE MISSISSIPPI

I went up to Hannibal, Quincy and Keokuk, on the Upper Mississippi. The first and the last named are enjoying a season of rest, but not refreshment - the railroads have stricken them dead for a year or two, and I cannot help fearing for Quincy also, now that she is going to build a bridge and let her trade cross the Mississippi, and go through without stopping. St. Louis is doing the same, and somebody has got to suffer for it some day, no doubt.

The railroads have badly crippled the trade of the Keokuk packets, too. They used to go crowded with passengers and freight all the time, but they have room and to spare now. And they don't set a good table any more, either. They never did set a very good table, for that matter, but it was at least better than it is now. Their officers are princes, though.

KEOKUK AND QUINCY:

The ups and downs I have exaggerated a little in Hannibal's case will fit a good many towns in the Mississippi Valley, and Marysville and one or two others on the Pacific Coast. Keokuk, Iowa, was one of the most stirring and enterprising young cities in America seven years ago, but railroads and land speculations killed it in a single night, almost, and for six years it has been sleeping. It is reviving, now, though, and a new and vigorous prosperity is promised it. Its chances are more to be depended upon than Hannibal's, I think.

89 Alta May 26, 1867

Keokuk

BAD HOTEL, BUT GIFTED PORTER

I stopped at the Heming House in Keokuk. It used to be a good hotel, but that proves nothing - I used to be a good boy, for that matter. Both of us have lost character of late years. The Heming is not a good hotel. The Heming lacks a very great deal of being a good hotel. Perdition is full of better hotels than the Heming.

It was late at night when I got there, and I told the clerk I would like plenty of lights, because I wanted to read an hour or two. When I reached No. 15 with the porter, (we came along a dim hall that was clad in ancient carpeting, faded, worn out in many places, and patched with old scraps of oil cloth - a hall that sank under one's feet, creaked dismally to every footstep,) he struck a light - two inches of sallow, sorrowful, consumptive tallow candle, that burned blue, and sputtered, and got discouraged and went out. The porter lit it again, and I asked if that was all the light the clerk sent. He said, "Oh no, I've got another one here," and he produced another couple of inches of tallow candle. I said, "Light them both - I'll have to have one to see the other by." He did it, but the result was drearier than darkness itself. He was a cheery, accommodating rascal. He said he would go "somewheres" and steal a lamp. I abetted and encouraged him in his criminal design. I heard the landlord get after him in the hall ten minutes afterward. "Where are you going with that lamp?" "Fifteen wants it, sir."

"Fifteen! why he's got a double lot of candles - does the man want to illuminate the house? - does he want to get up a torchlight procession? - what is he up to, anyhow?"

"He don't like them candles - says he wants a lamp."

"Why what in the nation does - why I never heard of such a thing? What on earth can he want with that lamp?"

"Well, he on'y wants to read - that's what he says."

"Wants to read, does he? - ain't satisfied with a thousand candles, but has to have a lamp! - I do wonder what the devil that fellow wants that lamp for? Take him another candle, and then if "

"But he wants the lamp - says he'll burn the d----d old house down if he don't get a lamp!" (a remark which I never made.)

"I'd like to see him at it once. Well, you take it along - but I swear it beats my time, though - and see if you can't find out what in the very nation he wants with that lamp."

And he went off growling to himself and still wondering and wondering over the unaccountable conduct of No. 15. The lamp was a good one, but it revealed some

disagreeable things - a bed in the suburbs of a desert of room - a bed that had hills and valleys in it, and you'd have to accommodate your body to the impression left in it by the man that slept there last, before you could lie comfortably; a carpet that had seen better days; a melancholy washstand in a remote corner, and a dejected pitcher on it sorrowing over a broken nose; a looking-glass split across the centre, which chopped your head off at the chin and made you look like some dreadful unfinished monster or other; the paper peeling in shreds from the walls.

I sighed and said: "This is charming; and now don't you think you could get me something to read?"

The porter said, "Oh, certainly; the old man's got dead loads of books ;" and he was gone before I could tell him what sort of literature I would rather have. And yet his countenance expressed the utmost confidence in his ability to execute the commission with credit to himself. The old man made a descent on him:

"What are you going to do with that pile of books?"

"Fifteen wants 'em, sir."

"Fifteen, is it? He'll want a warming-pan, next - he'll want a nurse. Take him everything there is in the house - take him the barkeeper - take him the baggage-wagon - take him a chamber-maid! Confound me, I never saw anything like it. What did he say he wants with those books?"

"Wants to read 'em, like enough; it ain't likely he wants to eat 'em, I don't reckon."

"Wants to read 'em- wants to read 'em this time of night, the infernal lunatic! Well, he can't have them."

"But he says he's mor'ly bound to have 'em; he says he'll just go a-rairin' and a-chargin' through this house and raise more well, there's no tellin' what he won't do if he don't get 'em; because he's drunk and crazy and desperate, and nothing'll soothe him down but them cussed books." [I had not made any threats, and was not in the condition ascribed to me by the porter.]

"Well, go on; but I will be around when he goes to rairing and charging, and the first rair he makes I'll make him rair out of the window." And then the old gentleman went off, growling as before.

The genius of that porter was something wonderful. He put an armful of books on the bed and said "Good night" as confidently as if he knew perfectly well that those books were exactly my style of reading matter. And well he might. His selection covered the whole range of legitimate literature. It comprised "The Great Consummation," by Rev. Dr.

> Cummings - theology; "Revised Statutes of the State of Missouri" - law; "The Complete Horse-Doctor" - medicine; "The Toilers of the Sea," by Victor Hugo - romance; "The Works of William Shakespeare" - poetry. I shall never cease to admire the tact and the intelligence of that gifted porter. I moved to the Tepfer house next day - a hotel which is well furnished, well conducted, and altogether a satisfactory place to live in.[90]

April 4 Thursday – Sam arrived in Keokuk at the Deming House four days before his lecture. He probably spent the time visiting Orion and Mollie, as well as other friends and cousins. [91] . Posters were placed on street corners claiming that "Sam Clemens, the greatest Humorist in America," was arriving to lecture. [92]

April 5 Friday – Sam moved to the Tepfer House because he did not like the service at the Deming House. [93]

April 8 Monday – Sam lectured at the Chatham Square Methodist Episcopal Church in Keokuk, Iowa to about 140 persons – "Sandwich Islands". [94] .

Quincy

April 9 - National Hall, Quincy, Illinois

April 9 Tuesday – From the Keokuk Constitution:

It has been many a day since our ribs were tickled so much as at listening to Sam Clemens' lecture last evening upon the Sandwich Islands….Those of our citizens who did not hear the lecture missed one of the richest treats of their lives. [95]

Sam lectured – "Sandwich Islands" – at the National Hall, Quincy, Illinois, where Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) had spoken in February. Lorch points out, "relatives of the family were living there in 1867 who may have arranged an invitation". [96]

In his letter to the Alta, which ran May 26, Sam mentioned staying in Quincy with General James W. Singleton (1811-1892) .

> But Quincy is a wonderful place. It has always thrived—sometimes slowly and steadily, sometimes with a rush—but always making an unquestionable progress. It claims a population of 25,000 now, and it looks as if the claim were well founded. It is the second city of Illinois, in population, business, activity and enterprise, and high promise for the future. I have small faith in their project of bridging the Mississippi, but they ought to know their own business.
>
> I spent a night at General Singleton's—one of the farmer princes of Illinois—he lives two miles from Quincy, in a very large and elegantly furnished house, and does an immense farming business and is very wealthy. He lights his house with gas made on the premises —made from the refuse of petroleum, by pressure. The apparatus could be stowed in a

90 Alta June 2
91 [MTL 2: 20 n2]
92 Lorch p 57
93 [MTL 2: 20n2].
94 [MTL 2: 20]
95 Lorch pp 57-8
96 Lorch pp 57-8

bath-room very conveniently. All you have to do is to pour a gallon or two of the petroleum into a brass cylinder and give a crank a couple of turns and the business is done for the next two days. He uses seventy burners in his house, and his gas bills are only a dollar and a quarter a week. I don't take any interest in prize bulls, astonishing jackasses and prodigious crops, but I took a strong fancy to that gas apparatus. [97]

On this same day, a letter from Sam concerning his lecture ran in the to the Quincy Herald. The letter was preceded by another from one "John Smith" (imaginary), asking him to lecture in Quincy. Sam's reply:

John Smith, Esq.—Dear Sir: It gratifies me, more than tongue can express, to receive this kind attention at your hand, and I hasten to reply to your flattering note. I am filled with astonishment to find you here, John Smith. I am astonished, because I thought you were in San Francisco. I am almost certain I left you there. I am almost certain it was you, and I know if it was not you, it was a man whose name is familiar.

I am surprised to find you here, John Smith. And yet I ought not to be, either, because I found you in New York, most unexpectedly; and I stumbled on you in Boston; and was amazed to discover you in New Orleans; and thunder-struck to run across you in St. Louis. You must certainly be of a sort of roving disposition, John Smith. You certainly are, John, and you know that a rolling stone gathers no moss. And a rolling Smith never gathers any moss. There is no real use in anybody's gathering moss, John, because it isn't worth any more in the market than sawdust is, and hardly even as much—but then, if we want to get along pleasantly with the world, we must respect the world's little whims and caprices; and you know that the world has a foolish prejudice in favor of a man's gathering moss. So you had better locate, John, and go to gathering some. It is no credit to you, anyhow, John Smith, that you are always sure to turn up wherever a man goes. It may be—no, it cannot be possible—that there are two John Smiths. The idea is absurd.

…

Come to National Hall Tuesday night, 9 th inst., John, and bring some of your relations. I would say bring all of them, John, and say it with all my heart, too, but the hall covers only one acre of ground, and your Smith family is a large one, John. [98]

Lectures in New York

From Explanatory Notes: Clemens returned to New York "in an express train ... a distance of nearly twelve hundred miles by the route I came," He stays at the Westminster Hotel.

From Lorch: "Back in New York again by April 16, Mark Twain immediately found himself involved in a demanding round of activity. He continued his correspondence with the Alta California, at the rate of $20 a letter, and contributed a number of articles to the New York Weekly on the Sandwich Islands. Furthermore, the Jumping Frog book was now in press and scheduled to appear April 30. Anticipation of his first book kept him

97 Alta May 26, 1867
98 Lorch p 58-9 [The Twainian, May 1939 p2-3].

in a simmer of excitement, added to which was unrest caused by his preparations for the "Quaker City" excursion to the Holy Land, schduled to begin June 8.". [99]

From Lorch: "If Mark Twain ever tried to assess the value of his New York and Brooklyn lectures in his career on the public platform there is no record of it. Yet their importance was enormous. Aside from the celebrity they provided him among the "Quaker City" passengers and in the New York area generally, their chief value lay in the assurance they gave him that his humor, style of speaking, and platform manner were as pleasing to eastern as to western audiences, and that his fear of the greater sophistication of eastern audiences greatly diminished."[100]

Cooper Institute

May 6 - Cooper Institute, New York City - "Sandwich Islands"

The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, established in 1859, is among the nation's oldest and most distinguished institutions of higher education. The college, founded by inventor, industrialist and philanthropist, Peter Cooper, offers a world-class education in art, architecture and engineering as well as an outstanding faculty of humanities and social sciences. *The Cooper Union*

Brooklyn

May 10 - Athenaeum, Brooklyn, New York - "Sandwich Islands"

The Brooklyn Athenaeum and Reading Room was founded in 1852 by a group of prominent Brooklyn citizens as a library and respite for young men, where they could gather as well for instruction as for that innocent relaxation, which the wear and tear of mercantile life so imperiously demands, according to its first president, John Taylor, in his first annual report.

The three story building, designed by William Field, had commercial storefronts on the ground floor, including a book store, the reading room and library on the second, and the concert/lecture hall, which could hold 2,000 people, on the third.

Irving Hall

May 15 - Irving Hall, New York City - "Sandwich Islands"

The original building on the site was Irving Hall, which opened in 1860 as a venue for balls, lectures, and concerts. It was also for many years the base for one faction of the city's Democratic Party.

99 Lorch p 60
100 Lorch p 67

The Quaker City

February – Sam went to popular shows and lectures, measuring his own attraction against what sold well in the big city. He crammed into a space “about large enough to accommodate a small spittoon” and, on the 3rd, studied the “performance” of the popular preacher, Henry Ward Beecher.

Sam made contact with Charles Webb, founder and former editor of The Californian, who was now back home in New York and living in an apartment only a few blocks from Sam’s Metropolitan Hotel. Webb and then co-editor Bret Harte had published a version of “The Jumping Frog” in December 1865. Webb encouraged Sam to collect sketches for a book, using the frog story as the lead story and the title. George W. Carleton once again refused to publish the story, even in a collection, so Webb agreed to publish it for a ten percent royalty. Webb introduced Sam to Edward (Ned) H. House, a noted Civil War correspondent for Horace Greeley’s New York Tribune. Sam, upon learning of Beecher’s planned excursion to the Holy Land, wrote to Frederick MacCrellish of the Alta, asking if the paper would pay his passage. While waiting, he decided to enter his name for the trip. The fare was $1,250 and the passenger list limited to 110. Beecher wanted to write a life of Jesus and needed to travel the Holy land. General William Tecumseh Sherman was going. Here was a trip that sparked Sam’s interest.

He took House with him to Captain Charles Crooker Duncan’s Wall Street office, where Ned claimed Sam was a baptist minister, in order to qualify as a character of high repute. however, they were unshaven and had stopped at a saloon for drinks. the next day Sam returned to Duncan, confessed his real identity, put down a deposit, and left character references.

March 2 Saturday – Sam telegraphed the proprietors of the San Francisco Alta California (Fred MacCrellish, William Augustus Woodward, Orlando M. Clayes, and John McComb). “Send me $1,200 at once. I want to go abroad.” Although the owners were skeptical, it was McComb who argued and won the day for Sam to travel abroad in exchange for letters to the Alta.The Quaker City:

> Samℓ Clemens Esq
> New York
>
> Dear Sir
>
> I have the honor to inform you that Fredk MacCrellish & Co. Proprietors of “Alta California” San Francisco Cal. desires to engage your services as special correspondent on the pleasure excursion now about to proceed from this City to the Holy Land. In obedience to their instructions I have secured a passage for you on the vessel about to convey the excursion party referred to and made such arrangements as I hope will secure your comfort and convenience. Your only instructions are that you will continue to write at such times and from such places as you deem proper and in the same style that heretofore secured you the favor of the readers of the Alta California. I have the honor to remain with high respect and esteem
>
> your obdt Servant
>
> John J. Murphy

I found home a dreary place after my long absence; for half the children I had known were now wearing whiskers or waterfalls, and few of the grown people I had been acquainted with remained at their hearthstones prosperous and happy—some of them had wandered to other scenes, some were in jail, and the rest had been hanged. These changes touched me deeply, and I went away and joined the famous Quaker City European Excursion and carried my tears to foreign lands. (*Roughing It*)

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SFB *San Francisco Bulletin*

ALTA *San Francisco Alta California*